

Timothy J. (Tim) Sampson Oral History Transcript

Interview conducted by Harvey Schwartz

August 19, 1998

Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University

1998, revised 2015

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San Francisco State University
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Email: larc@sfsu.edu

**Labor Archives and Research Center, SFSU
Timothy J. (Tim) Sampson Oral History Transcript**

Interviewer: Harvey Schwartz [HS]

Interviewee: Timothy J. Sampson [TS]

Date: August 19, 1998

For the early part of the interview, Tim Sampson did some editing of the transcription.

[Begin Tape 1 - Side 1 (A)]

HS: This is Harvey Schwartz. I am in Oakland, California, with Tim Sampson. Today is the 19th of August of 1998. This is part of the oral history collection of the Labor Archives & Research Center at San Francisco State University. Tim, I want to ask you where you were born, when you were born, and a little bit about your background.

TS: Okay. I was born in 1935, the year of the Social Security Act, in January in Chicago, on the campus at the University of Chicago lying-in hospital.

HS: Can you tell me a little bit about your growing up? What was it like growing up in Chicago? Why were you born on campus, by the way?

TS: Well, it was just a hospital.

HS: Okay.

TS: A good hospital in Chicago, kind of a world-class hospital in Chicago. And my father had gone to the university as a graduate student. He was a graduate student there in Criminology, and he actually was a close friend of the great organizer, Saul Alinsky. He and Alinsky had kind of hung out together as young men and were graduate students in criminology together and, as the story is told, Saul did his criminology field work by attaching himself as an observer to the Capone mob and learning the inside of the mob operation. They kind of liked Saul - he was a lively guy. Saul kind of hung out at my father's house when they were growing up together because my father's family was more securely middle-class than Saul's and they had better food. My grandfather - my father's father - was a self-described as a junk dealer. He actually dealt in - today we'd call him a recycler. He recycled burlap bags, which were used to contain most everything in those days. He dealt in used burlap and made a good living for his family.

When I was born, my father was a social worker and really prior to my birth had worked

in social work in Chicago, where he was active in the Office and Professional Workers of the CIO and was the president of the small local that represented social workers in private agencies. The large public aid local was -- the president was Saul Alinsky's wife, Helene. And -- then my father went in that period of time with people on the left, and the CIO was a communist-organized union, like a number of those CIO unions were. They were very good organizers, and my father was kind of a - in the pejorative term of the 1950s - a fellow traveler. I don't think he was a Party member, and he never talked a lot about his union time. I never had a lot of discussions with him, but I know that union time was an important time for him.

When I was born, or shortly after I was born, he began to move up the social work ladder. Most social workers were women, and the men moved much more rapidly into administrative positions. He moved as a child welfare worker to work for the state of Illinois in Springfield, the state capital. Then he went and got a kind of middle-management job in an agency in St. Louis, and we moved fairly rapidly, and then to Westchester County where he directed an agency. Then we were back in Chicago when I was in the seventh grade, and then went to -- I went to junior high school, the ninth grade, in Baltimore, where he was the director of the Jewish Family and Children's Agency.

And I went to a year of high school in Baltimore. I came back to Chicago after two years of high school when Robert Hutchins was the president of the University of Chicago. And they had a program for young people to go after two years of high school to college, and I was accepted into that program. It took me a long time to graduate from college 'cause I dropped out and whatever, but that's how I started my college career.

So when I got to social work school -- graduate school, ten years or twelve years later, they have a paper that you write to kind of familiarize yourself with your class and upbringing roots; they called it your "hometown paper." You wrote about your hometown and its influence on you. I never really had a hometown in the sense of I didn't grow up in one place because of this moving on my father's part, but Chicago was my hometown since I was born there and I kind of kept coming back there. Then I went back as a student there and I went back again and so forth, so I wrote my paper about Chicago. I remember I traced the color line on the South Side. Each time I came back, it was at a different point - the line of segregation between black and white was at a different point. So I kind of used my coming back and the color line changing to look at race and class in Chicago and kind of how I felt about that and what the impact was. So I'm kind of a Chicago boy, and that's my early history.

HS: When you mentioned the Office and Professional [Workers Union] as being very left-inspired, you mentioned it in connection with - it sounded for a second like the whole CIO, but you meant Office and Professional specifically -

TS: Yes. Well, most of the CIO -- many of the CIO organizers were Communist Party members and -

HS: **Sure, sure.**

TS: My father told me that it's not the same thing - but part of the organizing lore from my father - my father told me that he learned from those organizers the merit of writing up what happened in meetings. He said the saying that he learned was, "You have the meeting, I'll write up the minutes." [Laughing]

HS: **[Laughing] Right. Sounds like a labor union - oops, maybe I shouldn't have said that.**

TS: So I was brought up to understand that the record of a meeting that you had was at least as important, and perhaps more so in certain instances, than the meeting itself.

[Background conversation not related to oral history]

HS: **Right. Do you remember any personal anecdotes about Saul Alinsky from your youth?**

TS: No, I didn't really [know him]. My father knew Alinsky as a young man before he got married and before I came. What I do remember is that I met Alinsky in - I'm trying to remember the year that it happened - in the early 1960s. Alinsky had a place in Carmel. He was actually ultimately to die in Carmel after suffering a massive stroke or heart attack, whatever it was. Dropped dead on a Carmel street. But he came out pretty regularly to his place in Carmel for several reasons. One was to be with his second wife, whom he kind of installed there, and to have a place of refuge from his travels.

Then for a period of time he was negotiating to do organizing in California. As a matter of fact, there was talk of a project here in Oakland. I made a funny joke about it because the Alinsky project that brought him to national attention in his modern period was after he did "Back of the Yards." He did other organizing and had his Industrial Areas Foundation and did his work. With the advent of the Civil Rights Movement, he got involved in the black community in Chicago with church people and started an organization called The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), which became nationally known, and which embraced the Civil Rights Movement - The southern Civil Rights Movement - supported it. The idea of it was black people in the North organizing and Alinsky and church coalition organizing with them like the Civil Rights Movement, but it was the same assertion of rights, if you will, and involved some battles with Mayor Daly.

So The Woodlawn Organization spells T-W-O - they called it The Woodlawn

Organization, but it's spelled TWO. When Alinsky was dickering with church people here to organize in Oakland, I made the joke that they would call it The Oakland Organization, T-O-O, and that was a kind of play on words. But that never came about. Actually what happened was that Alinsky struck up a relationship with Gordon Sherman, who was a businessman who started Midas Mufflers, and Gordon Sherman gave him a lot of money to continue to base his work in Chicago. So Alinsky gave up an idea that he had of moving his operation out here.

Well, when he came out here to visit and to check out things out here, my father got in touch with him. We went several times and visited him in Carmel. At that time [I already had begun] to be working in organizing and interested in organizing. I had worked at a neighborhood center after I got out of graduate school in Los Angeles and had started my organizing work. I was very interested in Alinsky; Alinsky having made a major practical and theoretical contribution to organizing work. I always say that Alinsky is to modern American organizing as Freud was to psychoanalysis - kind of a founding father. His ideas about power and his ideas about strategy and tactics and some of his structural organizing ideas all were very important ideas that have been a part of organizing really since. Many, many people have benefitted from that contribution.

I don't think of it as being an Alinsky school of organizing. I think of his ideas as much more eclectic than that, and influencing a lot more people who don't see themselves as Alinsky people, but they learned how to think about power, strategy and tactics, and coalitions and mass organizing from Alinsky's ideas. So even those [who] have come after that didn't have any direct contact with Alinsky; there's a whole kind of sequencing of people who were trained by Alinsky and were directly influenced.

Well, when my father introduced me to Alinsky and I visited several times with him, I then was involved in two direct things with Alinsky. The organization that I had started with some others called the California Center for Community Development hired Alinsky for a consulting arrangement where we went to - actually it was at Asilomar. We went to the state-owned conference grounds there and spent the day picking Alinsky's brain about the work that we were doing. Then I enrolled in a two-week Alinsky training event that was put together by a number of the church people who were interested in getting him more permanently to work out here, and they had like a two-week training event. I went and Mike Miller went from SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee]. I actually had the benefit of spending several weeks in one of his seminars.

Later I entertained, briefly, ideas that I might have liked to work with him, but it didn't work out. He didn't have anything for me at the time, and I got other work and so that didn't happen. I wasn't a close friend of his or anything, but since my father had known him and we had visited together with my father, I was more [directly connected] than most people. I did have the two-week training thing.

HS: Right. The two-week training thing was around 1966, in that period?

TS: Yes.

HS: I was going to go back in time, but before we do, we might as well finish on this particular thread. In what ways have you, yourself, personally benefitted from Alinsky? I mean, you make reference to the wide pattern for organizers -

TS: Well, I think the ideas that Alinsky introduced into organizing that are most important are a clear understanding of power and how it works. We're very confused about power in American society; it's part of the mystification of the relations of power. So power is seen as something negative, and it's not polite to talk about it. The sources of power are mysterious. People don't understand how they can gain and exercise power in positive ways, and they simply [have], in some ways, carry around kind of a negative notion that power is what those in power have and what they do to you, and the notion that you can get any of this mysterious ingredient, power, and use it.

Alinsky had ways of thinking and talking about that that I think are very helpful. I mean, he was fond of saying that power is a neutral concept and power simply refers to the ability to act - to do what you want to do. He talked about power as flowing from on the one pole, money, and on the other pole, people. Those were the classic poles. So if you don't have money, you have to have people - and kind of a further extension, lots of people. A further - and that's kind of an antidote, an organizing antidote to the kind of mythological notion that individuals can change the world. In individualism, the notion is personal responsibility, and if there's a problem, you act on it yourself. All of that has a kernel of truth. It's not like it's a total wrong thing, but it leads you down a dead-end. You can't change the large things that affect your life by yourself. It doesn't teach collectivity, it doesn't teach cooperation, it doesn't teach organizing together, as a power-building process. So Alinsky emphasized more of that set of things and helped people, I think, to think clearly and about power.

The other thing was that he had an absolutely marvelous sense about strategy and tactics and he had such ideas - for example, he introduced the notion of physics to thinking about tactics. You know, for every action there's an equal and opposite reaction -- that kind of notion, so that you get in Alinsky strategic thinking that flows and gets you to think a step ahead. It's kind of like when you first learn how to play chess or checkers or something, you learn the moves and you learn to make your move. If you're going to become very good, you have to learn to anticipate the other person's response and build your response on that response. Most people never get to that point. And once you get to that point, now you're in a very strong position because then you can do something, get a reaction, and then use the reaction to take the next steps that you want. Since the other

side is not tending to think that way, you have a way of getting ahead of the game and getting skilled in process.

So I think that sense of tactics - where in the Alinsky jargon; there's a phrase, "The action is in the reaction." It's like you act by anticipating your opponent's reaction and planning for it. In anticipating not only what your opponent's likely to do, but several possibilities, and preparing for all, you then are in a position really to play the game, if you will, differently, and to make things happen that you couldn't [otherwise]. You're not simply reacting, you are, in fact, acting. The other person's reacting and you're then prepared to act again.

So I think -- The other thing that Alinsky was very clear about, since he was trying to build large organizations, was one of the only ways you really can build a large organization in most circumstances is that you have to put together the pieces that are already there. The notion that you can build a strong people's organization by simply one-by-one, you'll start one-by-one putting people together, is also fictional. People are already - as Alinsky was fond of saying, people are already organized. The job of the organizers is to find out how they're organized and use that knowledge and change those patterns to put those pieces together in a stronger way. So his notion of urban organizing was that people were in street-corner groups, they're in social groups, they're in groupings around barber shops and bars and beauty parlors, they're in churches. It's not that they aren't in an organization. So if you want to organize them, if you want to pull those things together in a larger organization, one way to do that is to have an organization where you can't join the organization by yourself. You don't join as an individual. You only join as a unit.

The [organization] church joins - he doesn't go to a church and get one or two members to join; he goes to a church and gets the church to buy in as a congregation. He goes to a soccer club in a Latino neighborhood and gets the soccer club to join the organization, not individual people off the street. Then if you got individual people, you basically tell 'em, "If you want to get into this, you got to get some friends and neighbors and start a block group or start something that you can be in organizationally." That builds the fabric of the organization in a different way than if you're trying to do it one-by-one. Now one-by-one organizing, the way unions do and the like, is different and still useful, and useful in circumstances to build direct membership organizations. But even there, informally what you have to think of is - what are the networks?

I remember I spent all day with [César] Chavez once and the day consisted of: I got up early and drove from Fresno to Delano, where he was living, and I picked him up and we drove back up to Madera. He wanted to see this Pentecostal minister there and talk to him. After he had that conversation, we went back and I said to him, "You know, César, we spent this whole day for you to go and talk to the minister. Why did we do that?" He

said, “He’s going to make me twenty members.” He’s going to make twenty members of the union, National Farm Workers. Well, he wasn’t trying to get that minister as an individual person. He knew that minister had farm worker members of his ministry. Even though César was organizing in a model of a [membership] organization, the church didn’t join. Individual farm workers were members, but the network was the small Pentecostal storefront church.

So even in a direct membership structure where you do join as an individual, all individuals are not equal. The issue is the networks. When I teach on this, I say, you knock on a door and you visit with somebody and you want to get ‘em in your organization, and you knock on the next door and visit with them, you want to get them in the organization. But what if I told you that the person in one house just moved here from Florida - they don’t know anybody, they have no relatives, they have nothing. They’re kind of talking and they’re a lively person, you would like to have them. Next door, the person is grumpy or reticent or whatever. But what if I told you that person has fifty-three relatives living within this community. Who would you like to spend your time with in building your organization? This lively person from Florida who’s not hooked up? Well, they may, eventually, get hooked up and make a contribution. We don’t want to say no. But I sure as hell would like to get this person that’s got fifty-three relatives living near my organization ‘cause I’m going to get something [more], you know, with them. Alinsky taught how people are connected - that you find out how they’re connected and then it’s the development of those connections and those informal and formal organizations in a community that you bring together to build a mass base.

HS: Can you give me an example of where you’ve employed that yourself? A historic example from your own career?

TS: Well, I use it every day. When organizing in the union at school, you try to identify people in departments who are leaders amongst their friends and colleagues, and you try to get those people who have networks and you try to find out about the networks that they have both in their department and kind of cross-campus by finding out about their interests and what they do and who they know. You try to follow those network lines as you try to get people to join the union on the campus. That would be an example.

Another example, in my current organizing, is I do home care worker organizing, you know, here in Oakland. And we’re always trying to find out - the home care workers don’t have a common workplace. They work in the home of elderly and disabled people for whom they do home care. So we’re trying to find out what their connections are in their neighborhood. Do they know other home care workers in their neighborhood? What are their family connections? You know, those kinds of things, to try to work through those networks and build support for the unions of political and legislative agenda and its contract agenda and so forth. So it’s similar basics - similar kinds of

principles.

HS: Okay. Tim, maybe we could move back a little bit in time to the University of Chicago where you go after - two years after high school?

TS: Um-hum -

HS: Kind of moving back - move back that way. Actually, I have one question which might seem kind of a curious one. Can you - can you at all look back and say why you followed your dad's footsteps into social work? Some people have parents who do wonderful things and then the kid does something entirely different. It may be fine but it's different. Do you have any sense of what -

TS: Yeah, I do. Well, first of all, let me tell you a little bit more about my life with my father and, you know - and how I did get into social work.

My father -- My own mother became mentally ill. She was schizophrenic, when I was four or five years old. And she had several - they would call them nervous breakdowns - and then she eventually was admitted to a state hospital in Illinois. In Elgin, Illinois. And she never came out of that hospital. She died in the hospital. I think as a small boy I went to visit her once, but then I didn't have any contact with her. So I was - my father was a single parent for a while, and after - and, of course, it was very distressing to him that his wife became ill and he had to ask his family for money and it was very difficult. And it was my - I have a younger sister - I had a younger sister - she died, but I had a younger sister at that time. And there were the two of us and my dad.

And he then married - remarried and that marriage didn't work very well, and after a couple of years then he divorced that woman. And then - I'll just finish his history briefly and then I'll go back.

HS: Sure. Did you actually give his name?

TS: Yeah, his name is Jerome Sampson. Jerry Sampson.

HS: And your mom for the record was?

TS: Ah, her name - my own mother's name was Isabel Bloomenstock.

HS: Okay. So he - he got divorced and -

TS: So he got divorced from his second wife and then he came to California, and when I went to the University of Chicago in 1950 from Baltimore, he went to California and made a

new life.

HS: Ah, let's turn it over again. We're short on tape. It's got another - we're going to call this the end of Side 1.

[End of Tape 1 - Side 1 (A)]

[Begin Tape 1 - Side 2 (B)]

HS: Okay. So he came out to California -

TS: So he came out to California at the same time that I left Baltimore to go to the University of Chicago, which was in January of 1950. Besides going after two years of high school, I was a member of the first mid-year class at the University of Chicago. They had traditionally only admitted at the beginning of the year 'cause they're on a quarter system, and high schools being semester systems, it didn't mesh. So they couldn't take people in the middle of the year. They finally figured out that they could kind of jigger the winter quarter and take a mid-year class. And that enabled them to take another set of people - to have access to another set of people who didn't want to wait a whole half a year to enter. So I was a member of the first mid-year entering class of the University of Chicago in 1950, and I was just fifteen years old.

HS: Yeah, you must have been a smart little fellow - young fellow.

TS: Well, I -

HS: You must have tested well and stuff.

TS: Yeah, I did.

So - and at that time my father went out to California. About a year before that he had left social work - his job as director of Jewish Family and Children in Baltimore - and he had begun to be a salesman. He had - he struggled throughout his life with depression - and he had had bouts of depression - and he finally decided that he didn't want to be in social work anymore and so he became a salesman. And after a year I went off to college, and he took my sister and went out to California and continued to be a manufacturer's representative. In Baltimore he sold paper products, but out here he sold girdles and bras.

And he met a buyer - he was a salesman - met a buyer, a lively woman, and married her. Lived ten years with her. When he - I'd already gone off to college at age fifteen and

actually after a year-and-a-half, when he met and married this woman, I dropped out - I didn't drop out. I quit the University of Chicago because I wanted to stay home with this new blended family. She had two teenage daughters and it was my sister and I, so we had four teenagers and it was kind of lively and - I didn't really think that this woman would be like a mother to me, but she was a lively woman and I grew very close to her. After ten years, she died of cancer.

My father then changed his career again. He had been active in the Democratic Club movement - the California Democratic Council - and actually was the president of the Beverly Hills Democratic Club, which was the largest Democratic club in the state in the heyday of that movement. And he went to Sacramento and by dint of his democratic club politics, got appointed by Pat Brown to the State Social Welfare Board. And then he decided that he would quit his selling, and he would go back to being a social worker, and he was appointed as a executive secretary of a welfare study commission, and then deputy director of the state welfare department by Pat Brown.

So he then met a Sacramento [woman] who was a librarian, married her, and lived with her ten years. I didn't think I was going to get close to her, but I did, and she died of cancer. So he really had two wonderful marriages to these women. One failed marriage and a good marriage to my own mother that was interrupted by her mental illness. Then he married again. A fifth marriage. And just after he got married, he didn't feel well. He went into the hospital and he had an aneurism and it burst and they rushed him to the operating room and saved his life, and he had five great years with this fifth marriage. And at the height of his - his professional work and so forth, he then died. Finally, one of his wives outlived him.

He and I got very close - we were close in the bringing up and he - he clearly was my - was very, you know, source of my values and those kinds of things.

[Brief interruption in the interview.]

So - but to get back to your question about kind of a connection to social work. As I had observed my father's struggle with depression and how as a social work executive, which is what he was by the time I became [aware], I developed a kind of a caution about social work in that it seemed to me that social workers were people who helped other people. But if you weren't whole yourself, if you didn't have the wherewithal to give to others, you could get in trouble. It wasn't healthy. And so I don't know if I had it all figured out, but I had that kind of caution. So while I had the impulse - I was interested in social work - I also was really cautious. I didn't know if I was whole. I'm struggling [like other] people too, and I didn't know if I had it to give. And I felt in certain ways that my father gave what he didn't have at various times in his life.

So I was kind of cautious. But I guess what overcame it for me was I had a really great social work experience. Which is - I was going to UCLA and I was working at a record store in Westwood in the 50s -

HS: Is that UCLA or USC?

TS: Ah, UCLA. After I'd - after I came home from the University of Chicago, I went to L.A. City College for a semester and then I went to UCLA. And so I was going to UCLA and working at a record store in Westwood, and my father said, what are you going to do this summer. I said, "Well, I'm going to work at the record store." And my father said, "Well, that's not very adventuresome," you know, he was kind of agitating. So I said, "Oh, okay, I think I'll hitchhike to New York." And he said, "Well, I don't know about that - that's a little too adventuresome for me." So I got it in my mind that I was going to hitchhike to New York.

So I hitchhiked to New York, across the country, and went to stay at the 92nd Street Y - YMHA, a fabled Jewish community center operation on the west side of New York and - There I am, staying there, I was going to look for work. And I see a notice that says that they want a bicycle trip leader. So I applied to be a bicycle trip leader and they had instituted, in cooperation with the American Youth Hostels, bicycle trips for young people in the summer. And there were twelve-day trips and co-ed. And they had ten or twelve participants; had two leaders, a man and a woman. There were young men and young women. The [participant's] average age was about fourteen or fifteen. And we would take a train - put our bikes on a train and take a train to the Pennsylvania Dutch country - to Philadelphia and bike into the Pennsylvania Dutch country, or take a train up to Boston and go out on - to Martha's Vineyard and Cape Cod. On another trip we took a train up - up to the White Plains area and then biked up through upstate New York into Massachusetts, into the Lennox and Tanglewood area. And they arranged for us to stay at either youth hostels, which were set up, or churches or other community facilities overnight. And we would bike - not [too] strenuously but somewhere between ten and thirty miles [potentially] in a day, and then we would go where we were staying and then we would do whatever it was that we did.

But the power of it was that you were a self-contained group and you were moving and self-sufficient. You had to take care of your bikes and carried everything with you. And they had planned these trips and everything, but you were - and you could make all kinds of decisions. Should we stay an extra night here, should we go there, what should we do? So the group process was really amazing, you know. And it was really great 'cause it was - the kids really liked it because it was this feeling of accomplishment and autonomy and it just was right for these kids. And it was great. So - and I was good at it and worked well with my co-leaders, women that I worked with, to do these trips. So I did this for three summers.

And that experience really convinced me that working with people in groups, in particular, was something that I could really do and I was really interested in, so that kind of took me over the - over the [concerns I mentioned before]. And while I did identify with my father because I had a strong identity with him and took my identity - my identity as a Jewish person directly from him, my identity as a male from him, you know, my values, all these things very much in relationship to my father. And fortunately the various wrinkles that certainly were there because I was very angry with my father over my first mother's illness. It wasn't his fault, but as a small child I felt very deprived and he was there and, you know, I - and he was - that was very hard for him because he really - that kind of hit him where he lived. I mean he knew he wasn't responsible, but it was a bad feeling to have, you know.

And I didn't - it wasn't overt or anything. I mean, I wasn't, you know - but those were the kind of things, the kind of wrinkles that were in there. But in later years, particularly since we worked in California and then from when - you know, when I came out here in '70 and until he died in '82, that whole ten-year period we were very close and worked out all the kind of glitches in our relationship and just enjoyed each other. And we're part of a lot of things together - did things together - work - did work together and some things of that nature, and that was very satisfying. So that's kind of what that - that connection was.

When he was working - when Pat Brown started to revise his position and do the great - make the great American political mistake of moving toward the middle to run against Ronald Reagan for a third term, a maneuver that is highly overrated and misses the whole problem of if you move away from your base, you're a loser in American politics. And so there's the notion that the - the best ground to occupy is mid-ground, you know, you want to be in the middle. Well, it's one of those things that there is some element of truth in, and it's certainly true in certain ways from a policy point of view, but it's - from a political organizing point of view, it very often is the exactly wrong move. You have to have an inspired and consolidated base and the general notion that you can move toward the other candidate, position-wise, and your base will have nowhere else to go but after you, doesn't work well. And it didn't work well for Pat Brown. He started moving away from his - many of the things that my father liked, and my father was one of those who just left early. He just didn't like what was happening.

He tried to put together consulting and organizing stuff, the beginning of the poverty program, and that didn't work out too well for him and he wound up going to New York and getting a job working in the poverty program in New York. And then they - he and his wife - came back here and he got the job that lasted him until his death. Which was - Together with some others, he started something called the Jewish Public Affairs Committee, which was kind of an effort to give the Jewish community kind of a social

justice, and Jewish issues, lobbying, representation in state government, in Sacramento. And his interest was not in the traditional Jewish issues like being cautious about affirmative action because of quotas and like the standard positions on Israel and those things. He was - and vigilant on the separation of church and state, and so forth. But he was trying to get the Jews into more social justice issues as part of a larger coalition there. Sometimes he would do the other chores, but - and then sometimes he succeeded and sometimes it wasn't as good and it didn't work as well. But it lasted for him as a - as a job and it brought him back into politics and the legislative work that he had done previously for the state welfare department, and that he had done when he had been in the [democratic] club movement involved with many of the people, particularly from the L.A. area, who had used the club movement to get elected to the legislature and so forth.

So that was a very - And so for that twelve years, when I was out here, and he was here, we - you know, we spent a lot of time together and he was very pleased with - that I had gotten this teaching job at San Francisco State and continued to do my organizing work, and I was proud of the work that he did and we just had a nice feeling.

[At this point, Tim's editing was reduced with very few corrections.]

HS: Sure. What year was he born?

TS: He was born in - hmm, I want to say - died - he was 72 in '82, so 1910 -

HS: 1910 -

TS: - yeah.

HS: Can you - actually I was going to ask you what you did - you mentioned when you dropped out of the University of Chicago, you had been in and out of school at various times. What kinds of things did you do besides work in the record store and - and do summer jobs with the -

TS: Well, I worked in Jewish Center work and when I first dropped out from UCLA, I just never went back to California after I hitchhiked to New York and did the [bike trips], and I got a job - the first job I got was in a fabric house on Madison Avenue. I was a - I went and got the fabric and brought it to the cutter and then rolled it up, unrolled it for the cutter, and then rolled it back up and put it back with the other bolts of fabric. And I did that awhile and then I saw an ad for a record store - for Sam Goody's Record Store. And so I ran over on my lunch hour and I got hired to work at Sam Goody's. And Sam Goody, himself, and his principle lieutenant, kind of took a shine to me, and I was given kind of a position of - I got to be a cashier, which he really only let mainly family members behind the cash register. But he let me do cashier work, and he let me have the

very important job of taping up people's packages when they came in the door so they couldn't steal anything, and being kind of a person in the front, which was where the action was - in the front. And I got to also work on the floor and advise people what records to buy and the like - but it was a very good job that I really liked. And I was back in the record business again.

Then when I went back to school at the University of Chicago, trying to recapture my feeling - my good feelings about the University of Chicago, I continued to kind of commute to New York and - summers and holidays and the like, and I - Sam Goody made an arrangement that I could do a day's work any time I walked in the door. So I could hitchhike to New York from Chicago, work a couple of days in - at Goody's to make the money for the trip, and then I could go back to school, you know. And it was really very wonderful - kind of thing for me.

And then each summer I did the bicycle trips and - and then my going back to Chicago at that time didn't work from a school point of view and I was still kind of troubled and I didn't really apply myself and I didn't - I didn't recapture the great intellectual feelings that I had when I was there in the first place and so I went - um, after doing the - the bicycle trips three summers, the summer after that, the summer of 1957, I guess it must have been, I went back to California and - or maybe it was the summer - well, anyway, in that period of time, I went back to California and - yeah, it was the summer of '57 - and I worked as a camp unit director at the Jewish Center's camp, kind of carrying on my Jewish Center's work. I had, in Chicago, worked as a Jewish Center worker after I had worked as a Jewish Center bicycle leader in New York, and I had done Jewish Center work in Chicago, and so then I did Jewish Center connected summer work in California -

HS: What part of California?

TS: In Los Angeles.

HS: That's what I thought. Okay.

TS: Yeah. And the cent - first the Center's camp and then I went - in the fall of 1957, I - and this comes - the current connection you'll hear - in the fall of 1957 I got a job - I actually had two jobs. I got - I was working part-time in a record store again, and - near City College, and I was also working as a group leader at a Jewish Center in Hollywood - Hollywood/Los Feliz Jewish Community Center. And the guy that was my boss there had been a classmate of Nancy's at UC Berkeley School of Social Work and they had graduated in 1956 and -

HS: Nancy's your wife?

TS: Yeah.

HS: Okay. For the record to the person that doesn't know anything else.

TS: Right. And they had graduated - they had gone to UC Berkeley School of Social Work together and had graduated. And - Anatol was his name. Anatol Schaeffer. And his wife, Harriet, was very friendly and I had met them at the summer camp because my boss had - was a good friend of theirs and invited them to come up to the summer camp. And they came up to the camp and I had met them and then that's how I got hired as a group leader in the fall.

And Harriet said, well, you're going to be working on Tuesday afternoon and Tuesday night as a group leader. Anatol - we lived nearby the center and Anatol comes home for supper. Why don't you just come home with him on Tuesdays. I'll give you supper. Well, that's a good deal, so - then one day Anatol said, "Well, when you come home, there's going to be this woman there and we're not trying to do anything or fix you up or anything." And I said, "Well, you know, I'm single," you know, whatever. So I came to their house and Harriet greeted us at the door and said, "Oh, a friend is dropping by." And Anatol said, "Well, I already told him all about that." And Harriet was kind of furious but - and Nancy came to dinner and we started dating and got married in the summer of '58, and celebrated just this last week our 40th wedding anniversary.

HS: That is great.

TS: And in one of those - you know, I mean, I suppose you could say it's bittersweet, Harriet, our matchmaker, just died. And she - we went a weekend before - or two before our 40th wedding anniversary, went to her wonderful celebration of life and four hundred of her friends at the Berkeley Rep. And her husband, that Nancy had gone to school with, had died when we first came out here of cancer, and she had remarried, and - and a really good guy. A musician who was also - had been very active in a variety of things, including he's been the treasurer of "We Do The Work" Board. His name was Dan Charlotte. And he - he and Harriet had a wonderful life. We - it was kind of a moving on for her, so we were close to her before she got married. It didn't have anything to do with him or anything. We just - and we saw them from time to time, but we weren't - we just weren't real close. But she has a son who's a really terrific union organizer and - name John O. Schaeffer - and he works for SEIU - works for the International in L.A. And he and I do stuff together for the union.

So they had this wonderful celebration of life for Harriet and then - which we said, you know - every one of us testified to Harriet's skills of relationship, and we said, "Well, we'll testify. She got us together and we lasted for forty years." You know, this is really - really terrific, so -

HS: Now, you - you're - can you briefly - just briefly outline Nancy's career? She had a career that was -

TS: Well, Nancy - Nancy grew up in Long Beach and - much of the time at - where her mother still lives at the home and where we were married in 1958 and where we visit - have visited very often since. I feel I'm kind of a Long Beach boy by having spent over forty years, a big chunk of time in Long Beach as my - as I say, my mother-in-law's house, so - where I was married. I was - Nancy and I would go in, and I'd go in front of the mantelpiece - the fireplace and say, "We were married right here, you know." She says, "Tell me about it."

So Nancy went to Long Beach City College and then she went to Long Beach State briefly and then she went to finish her undergraduate work up here at UC Berkeley in social work as she got into social work because she had a terrific teacher at Long Beach State, a P.E. teacher, who understood about groups. We had this kind of group work connection. And she got into - interested. And her training was - her social work training at UC Berkeley, graduating in 1956, was in social group work. And my - when I went to social work school in 1960, after I got out of the army - I was drafted in 1957 - and we were - when I was in the army when we were married and got out early - I guess I was drafted in '58 and we were married in the summer of '58 - and then I got out early to return to school to the University of Chicago where I could finish my BA after ten years - ten years from 1950. I got my BA in 1960. And - it only took me two quarters, and I couldn't do that anywhere else because of the whole structure of credits and the whole way things were set up. So we went back to Chicago to do that.

And then I went to social work school at the University of Southern California and I focused on social group work - this group work thread. And Nancy, after she graduated in '56, she became a gang group worker in Los Angeles. And she worked with young women in Watts and East L.A., pre-delinquent and delinquent kids, as a street gang worker. And then - that's what she was doing when I met her. And then after we were married, she was still doing that. And then she moved - after I got out of basic training, I was assigned to be a social work technician in the - then army prison at Lompoc in Santa Barbara County. And - it's now a Federal prison. And the barracks where the enlisted people stayed were converted when the Feds took it over and that's where some of the Watergate people, like Halderman, served their time in the Lompoc prison, and where I served my time in the army. And Nancy moved up to be with me and went to work as a child welfare worker in Santa Barbara County and Santa María.

And then we went back to Chicago and she worked at Traveler's Aid as a social worker. And then - oh, before that she went - we went to Fort Ord for my last part of my army career and she went to - worked at a family service agency in Monterey. And then we

went back to Chicago and she worked at Traveler's Aid, and then we came back to Los Angeles and she put me through graduate school working as a child welfare worker for the County Welfare Department in Los Angeles.

And then she had - then she retired from social work and had our kids and when they were grown and whatever, she went back - kind of retooled herself and started working as a - I guess it's almost ten years ago now - started working as a group worker in a nearby place here, working with frail elderly people and was very interested in working with people at the end of life as they are in the skilled nursing facilities. And particularly interested in the group work and activities with them.

And then she ran into a big contradiction which was her father was dying of - of cancer - do you need to change your -

HS: Real close. We're going to call this the end of Side 2 and go on to the next tape.

**[End of Tape 1 - Side 2 (b)]
[Begin Tape 2 - Side 3 (A)]**

HS: Okay. Now you mentioned that your wife Nancy's dad was dying of cancer.

TS: So this presented her with kind of an emotional contradiction. Here she was helping strangers at the end of their lives and here her father was at the end of his life and she wasn't helping him. So she decided that she should go and be with him and help him to die. And he was dying of prostate cancer and had been ill and - you know, the course of illness over a period of several years, and had good times and so forth, but clearly his time was coming. So she went down and - he lived south of L.A. in an old town called Leucadia, out on the coast, north of San Diego. And she accomplished her mission of spending good time with him and helping him to - till the end of his life. Helping him to die. And they had a big celebration of his life.

And she then came home and it turned out that pretty soon after that, her aunt, her mother's sister, who had lived with her mother for most of her life, she was ninety and her time came, and so Nancy went down and helped her aunt. And when she got home from that, she decided that she really wasn't ready to go back into that nursing home work. It just wasn't - it didn't have the same appeal to her, and she had been through these - the family things and she was in good shape, but it - instead of in any way whetting her appetite for helping people at the end of their life, she wasn't ready to continue that practice. So she has not worked outside of our home since then. She's active and - in the Older Women's League, a group that she helped start here, and she

does some things at the League of Women Voters and increasingly has done a fair amount with hiking. She walks at the Berkeley Hiking Club and the Sierra Club and walks a couple of days of week and goes on outings and the like. And so that's her tale.

HS: Sure. Yeah. Actually, I wanted to ask you something about the period. In 1958, you're in the U.S. Army - you're in the U.S. Army and you're in the U.S. Army prison program as a social worker technician. I was in the army. I never quite made the stockade, but [laughing] the whole army is itself in one sense a stockade for everybody at one level.

TS: Yeah.

HS: It's stockade - there's stockades within stockades. But what - can you characterize that experience? Tell me what you saw, what it was like -

TS: Well, it was an interesting experience. When I was - I was drafted. And in basic training I started trying to figure out what was going to happen to me. I had two concerns. I wanted to get into some kind of work that would be the best that I could expect, and the other thing was I was worried - I was going with Nancy and we were go - soon to be married, and I wanted to be near her. So I - my basic training was at Fort Ord, and that was fine. And I figured out - I heard about a program where - the way things were that whatever you got into, your military trade, called your military occupational specialty, MOS, your primary MOS, whatever that was, there was also a secondary MOS, which was what they called the picket line MOS. One, one, one, which was basic infantryman.

So I found a program that if you got into this program, your primary MOS would be chaplain's assistant, and your secondary would be clerk. So you wouldn't even have a secondary one, one, one. So I applied to be a chaplain's assistant. And they announced in our company one morning that two people from our company had been accepted in the chaplain's assistant program, me and another person, but that I wasn't going to be going into it because I had already been given an assignment, unbeknownst to me. So I was to report to the lieutenant who would tell me.

So I went to the lieutenant and he said, "Well, you're going to be assigned as a nine, five, one." And I said, "Well, what's that?" And he said, "I think it's a cryptographer." I said, "Cryptographer? That - I don't have any vocation for that." I don't - you know, and I had this vision of the army takes you and assigns you something, you know, a hundred and eighty degrees from anything that you would like and whatever. That's what people said happened, you know.

HS: Yes, I remember it well.

TS: So then I shifted to the important thing, I said, "Well, where is the training for this cryptography?" He said, "Fort Benning, Georgia." So I said, "Oh, my God. This is terrible." Then he kind of said, "I don't think this is right." He said, "I don't think this is - it must have the code wrong or something. I'll let you know in a few days." So a few days later he calls up and said, "No," he said, "I was wrong. The number was wrong," or whatever. You're going to be a social work technician. And you're not going to advance training. You'll just be assigned on-the-job training and you're going to go to the army prison at Lompoc. So that made sense to me because I was going to be a social worker, which I had kind of talked to them about, and Lompoc was in driving distance with L.A. and things were looking up. And so that's what did happen to me.

Actually, I had gone through this elaborate discussion, very - kind of pompous discussion about what I did in civilian life when they did the interviewing for that, which I tried to explain that I was - that I was - hadn't been to social work school, but I had this social work identity and I had this interest in groups, and so I said, you know, I'm - and I was doing this group work stuff. So I said, you know, I'm a group worker and, you know - and Nancy had been trained as a group worker - I said I'm a social group worker and let me explain this to you and - and it's just like if you're working with young people and you're working - and there's a - you know, kids and a baseball game and a kid doesn't do well in the baseball game and you're - you're the youth worker, you kind of put your arm around the kid, give him support, good feeling. I said, well, that's what a recreation worker does. But a social worker, they really know about the - how the people are, and when they put their hand around the kid, it's really -

HS: [Laughing]

TS: - as if there's a difference, you know. I mean -

HS: Right. Sure -

TS: - I don't think there is a difference now. But I explained this difference so compellingly, that the guy looked up in the occupational thing and found out well this group worker is a social worker, so he put me down as a social worker, so I wound up in the - and being assigned as a social worker in an army prison was a really terrific assignment because the things you don't want to have, if you're a low-ranking person in the army, the bad duty is guard duty and KP and other onerous details. In a prison, the MP's do the guard duty and the prisoners do the onerous duties like KP.

HS: [Laughing] Sure.

TS: So the draftee enlisted people don't have to do either - any of the negative things. The worst duty I had there was we were assigned to help put together - Lompoc is a town that

has this long tradition of they grow flowers. Many flowers - the Lompoc Valley has flowers. They grow commercial flowers. So they have like a flower parade and they have floats and the army has a float. So we were assigned to help build the float. That's the worst - that was about the worst assignment -

HS: That's pretty good -

TS: - that we got in the whole - you know, in the whole time that I was there. And the army was trying to be part of the modern penology movement and to have groups and other - psychotherapy and that kind of psychological treatment and to try to help people that - you know, to - so that they - they would - you would kind of cure these criminals so to speak. And to get away from the philosophy of prison as a punishment, of prison as a rehabilitative thing, which was the kind of watchword of modern penology. And the prison - the army prison had - all kinds of people came into it, ranging from serious crimes like murder and, you know, rape and grand larceny and so forth, to all kinds of black market dealing. And most of the people - and all the army offenses like AWOL and desertion and all those things - and we were the funnel point for all the people coming from the Far East. If you got in trouble in the Far East, then you were sent to Lompoc. And the other army prison was at Leavenworth. Army prison at Leavenworth.

So one of the things that started to happen was that the army figured out since they had the draft, which both kept enroll - people that didn't want to be drafted often joined to get a better deal, and then you had the draftees as a steady flow of people. They figured out that the way to reduce crime in the army was anytime you got into minor trouble, they would put you out of the army so then you weren't around to get in major trouble and wind up in the army prison. So the prison population began to decline while I was there. And it created a problem because there wasn't enough prison labor to do all the stuff, and we were - we might have actually had to mop the floors or something. But before that could happen, they decided to close that prison and that was the end of my social work in an army prison.

But the other thing that I do remember is that we were - the enlisted people who were social work and psychological technicians - social workers did - we interviewed people when they first came in, and we interviewed them yearly and prepared these write-ups and - for recommendations, whether they should be restored to duty or whether they should be put out of the army or, you know, what should happen to them after their term in prison and so forth. And that was our official function. And unofficially, we worked with the officers who were psychiatrists who were drafted and clinical psychologists who were drafted, and they wanted to institute this kind of army treatment program. And then we worked with them, and since they were draftees and we were draftees, we had in common the sergeants who were our immediate bosses, they were regular army people who had drifted in as cushy duty into this work, and some, I suppose, with some interest

in it. But generally speaking - and they lived in town and we lived in the barracks as they were married and with their families in town. And there were a lot of bad connections because we were - we looked down our noses at them and aspired to have common - commerce with the officers who were more like us and who were professionals. And we saw ourselves - even though I wasn't a professional social worker, I wasn't trained at the time, I regarded myself in that vein and the like. And we were all college graduates and these sergeants were just - you know, so we didn't have any use for them and that was stupid because they could make life as difficult as they could for us, and so -

HS: **Absolutely.**

TS: - you know, I was not as bad about it as some of my friends who kind of would tease these sergeants and use all kind of psychological jargon with them and just make them furious. And I told 'em to cut this out. You know, you're just going to get us in trouble, and any time they could do anything to us and - my whole preoccupation was to work hard during the week and then get as much time off as I could so I could go to L.A. and be with Nancy. And if I worked it right, I could get a pass that I would be off on Friday and that I could - if I really worked it right, I could get away Thursday afternoon and then I wouldn't have to come back until Sunday - Monday morning, actually, to be at work. And so if I could do that, it's what I would work on.

And that also was a contradiction because the sergeants really resented the fact that we - they didn't want any time off. They just want to work from nine to five and go home to their families. That was their regular thing - they didn't need a three-day pass or whatever. That was - was a different circumstance. And they really resented that. We kind of - so we tried to work, in effect, overtime. And we would have these groups at night and whatever, make deals with the officers that they would give us time for it. And the sergeants were furious and they said things like, there is no overtime. You're in the army twenty-four hours a day, buddy, you know, you don't get a - you know.

And then we were, again, fairly [unintelligible] - so well, you can order us to - and they said, you gotta do this, these groups and all this stuff that you want to do, you know. That's - you know, that's on your - that's on army time. You don't have any of your own time. Then we said, no, that's not - we don't have to do it. It's volunteer. We have to get time off for it. You had these negotiations and you had all this -

HS: **[Laughing]**

TS: - all these tensions and whatever. We were able to kind of work it out as best we could and then get out of there and I could, you know, go to Los Angeles.

And then finally when I - when I got - after we were married in the summer of '58, then I

guess at the beginning of '59, Nancy moved up and we got a little house in Guadalupe on the coast. And she worked in Santa Maria and I continued to be in the army at this prison. And then they closed the prison - or they - they turned it over to the Feds and the army fades it out, and there was all kinds of rumors about where we would be reassigned. And it turned out that I was just reassigned back to Fort Ord to work in the post stockade at Fort Ord, doing the same interviewing work. And it was really a very nice time of our life because it was great - it was the fall when we went there, end of the summer in 1959, and we got a nice little house in Seaside and I worked at the post stockade and came home for lunch. And Nancy worked - got - only could get a half-time job, which was nice, because she had time at the Family Service in Monterey. And we walked all over the Monterey Peninsula. It was a beautiful - the fall is really a lovely time there, and we just really enjoyed that area, and enjoyed being there.

And then I got out - I was let out early to go back to school for the winter quarter at - in the end of '59 in Chicago. So we went back to Chicago and that was - but it was - actually a really - I remember one story - one group I had was a group of WAC men who wanted really to listen to jazz. And they not only wanted to listen to jazz, but they also, unbeknownst to me, at the time, really wanted to do some drug-related trafficking, and for some of them, wanted to pursue homosexual relationships. But I didn't know any of that -

HS: Now this is in the army?

TS: This is in the prison.

HS: This is in Fort Ord? Or at Lompoc -

TS: No, this is at Lompoc.

HS: Okay.

TS: So I had this group, and it was - ostensibly it was a music listening group. And, again, ostensibly, it was to listen to classical music. And so record companies had given us classical music, and I was like the sponsor of the group. And the men were really running it and they had these other agendas. And so they sent away and we got some jazz. Well, I liked jazz so I - you know, I understood that, you know, part of the whole thing was their kind of autonomy as a group. I knew about groups and whatever, so they'd come and they'd suffer through a little Mozart or something -

HS: [Laughing]

TS: - and then they'd - then they'd put on jazz. Modern jazz was what they were really

interested in. And so I learned to like the jazz and I learned also that - that they had their ways of organizing to do their stuff. And then afterwards, you know, somebody kind of explained to me all that was happening, which I was more or less oblivious to at the time. But it was really an interesting - an interesting group, I remember.

And when the population - the thing that gave us leverage to get time off was when the population began to drop, then they couldn't let the prisoners off during the day. They go to the therapy groups during the day. So they had to do 'em at night and so then we made this rebellion in which we said - we used the leverage, we said, we're not going to do the therapy groups at night. That's our time off, you know, unless we get compensatory time off. If - we'll do it. And it was our interest because then we could go about our weekend business.

So the reason why they needed the groups was you - if you were following this modern rehabilitative model, you had to have these groups. And you couldn't have 'em in the day because the prisoners had to do all the work in the day, and you couldn't - you couldn't let 'em off their work to go to their groups, so - and the groups themselves - some of the prisoners wanted to gain some insight and support and whatever. But generally speaking, the main reason why the prisoners wanted to be in the groups is so they'd get a better recommendation to be put back to duty and everything. That he went to the group and, you know, all that stuff.

HS: Right.

TS: So if you took yourself seriously - which I didn't take myself as seriously as most of the people, but if you took yourself seriously, you're doing this deep-dish psychotherapy - which is not - they're doing to get a good write-up, and you're kind of, you know, do this stuff. It's really, you know -

HS: It's very army, in some ways.

TS: Yeah.

HS: And probably very much like prisons -

TS: Yeah, it was really quite - so a very good learning experience, you know, and - particularly after Nancy came up and I didn't have to be on this merry-go-round of trying to manipulate the situation to get off as early because I didn't need that as much anymore 'cause she was up there.

And then we also enjoyed that area. Guadalupe is a little farm labor town and it's out near the ocean, near a town called Nipomo, and there's a - beaches there. And actually

the sand dunes in that area is where they filmed all the Valentino movies. All the - there was big whole movie-making up there. So we walked around that whole area. We really enjoyed that whole area as well. So it was - you know.

My being drafted was painless in the sense that I got drafted, I got assigned to do this interesting work in an army prison. It furthered my identification with social work. It was here in California. It was an interesting area. Got my wife - got married, got Nancy to come up there. And then when - after a period of great uncertainty, simply got reassigned back to Fort Ord, which worked fine for my last period of time. And then got out early, only had to do twenty months instead of twenty-four, something like that, to go back to school. So it worked out, you know, really marvelously for me, my time in the army.

HS: Seeing this group of black guys with their - with their agenda which was kind of under the surface of things, you know, on the top of it's jazz, we want jazz music. Do you - you know, I mean, I was kind of like a social worker in the sense for five years. I did older worker job placement for the Oakland Private Industry Council. And different people have different agendas, different reasons for being there. Sometimes they're just there to satisfy their unemployment, and things like that. I mean, did - you know, did you - I guess what I'm asking you is - is there some kind of long-term impact as a result of that whole experience? Long-term sense of looking for layers of what's going on?

TS: Well, I guess the only thing - oh, it did help me understand better the ways of the world and what motivates people and, you know, that - that kind of thing. The biggest contradictions - I didn't get really to the contradictions around in the - in the music group around using it for drug traffic and for homosexual liaison, being with their boyfriends and so forth. I didn't get that part. I just didn't know that and later people explained it to me. But the part I did get, which I thought was fine and I was willing to be complicit in was that the authorities wouldn't let 'em have a - a music group to listen to jazz. That was not proper. But they would let 'em have it - a classical music club. So they basically said, okay, we'll have a classical music club and then they - and the guy that - was the sponsor before me, started the process. You write your record companies. We have this club and would you send us some records. And they would send records. So when the guys found out about this, then they started sending to some other record companies and getting some other records.

And so then - but they knew that if it turned - if people found out that they were just playing jazz there, that - that the whole thing would be suspect and that they might lose it. So they - we had to have some classical music. Well, I liked the classical music. I didn't know very much from the jazz. I came to value the jazz as well, but - and they kind of tried to instruct me and the like. But it wasn't - and then later, finding out that there was

even more to what meets the eye - and it also was - you know, I mean, it just gave you a better understanding of people and the way of the world.

I suppose in certain circumstances you could become cynical or bitter or - you know, if it had a negative effect on you. It didn't have a negative effect on me. It didn't make me cynical. It made me understand things better so - in that sense. Things are not always what they seem.

HS: [Laughing] Yeah.

TS: A lot of stuff going on. Whatever. The men were good to me. I mean, I was a necessary ingredient. They had to have somebody like me that would be their front person. They - you know, they were friendly and we had our - we had our - we had our club.

HS: Yeah, sure. Sure. That's - that's wonderful stuff.

Okay, after - after the University of Chicago, you go to USC. You get your masters of social work. Anything that you remember special from your experience at USC?

TS: Oh, sure.

HS: That's the right answer, by the way. [Laughing]

TS: When I went - when I was applying to school for social work, I - you know, SC wasn't, you know, like the - SC was one of the top schools on the West Coast. UCLA didn't have a strong school for social work, and SC being a private university and whatever wasn't - you know, I wanted to come back to California - Nancy wanted to come back to California and - but the nicest thing was I was offered a very good scholarship. The National Institute of Mental Health had these scholarships, and it was very - a very good fellowship. And so we didn't hesitate. That's where I got this fellowship and it was in L.A. and we could go back to the area where we had met and where Nancy's family was. And my father, I think, at that time, was probably in Sacramento. But back to California.

So out we came. And actually I had a connection with my father. The dean was a guy named Malcolm Stintson, that had been a social worker in - for - in Springfield with my dad, in Illinois. And Malcolm Stintson had gone to Minnesota where he had been a social worker for many years, and had been involved with Hubert Humphrey's political roots in Minnesota. And my father knew him well. He was a funny guy, I always remember. And so I had kind of like a special connection to the dean. That's not how I got in or anything. But it's like I knew stuff that most of the students didn't know because I knew who the dean was and who some of the faculty were through my father and - you know, whatever.

And they had a meeting and the dean was kind of an off-hand fellow and he made this comment, I remember I constructed this whole story, and the dean said, "Oh, this is the faculty. Everybody knows the faculty. I'm not going to bother introducing the faculty." And so I said to my classmates - so we go through two years, we don't know any of the faculty because the dean didn't bother to introduce 'em at the meeting where he should have introduced them. So the - my classmates are asking me, "Who's that? Who is that? Who is that?" I know some of them, so I'm kind of telling them, you know.

But I wasn't kind of unusual. It was kind of a - you know, typical bell-shaped curve. We had a large class. A relatively small number of people interested in group work, so that was a set within a set. And - a relatively small number, but not - not only one or two or something who were kind of progressive politically, which is kind of where I had gotten by that time. And I had been involved in - a little bit, in student politics when I was at the University of Chicago. There was a - kind of a - it wasn't SDS, but it was kind of a related political party at the University of Chicago. I was involved as a student representative party, SRP. I was involved a little bit in that. Actually, one of the people that was in that went to teach at Davis, where he remains to this day. Don Villarejo.

And so any - I had begun, kind of, to be involved in some politics, but I still was pretty much just as a liberal Democrat. But I have that kind of sense. And so - but the good thing that happened to me is in my undergraduate career, I had intellectual interest when I first went to the University of Chicago, but I wasn't a very good student. And then my speckled undergraduate career -

[End of Tape 2 - Side 3 (A)]
[Begin Tape 2 - Side 4 (B)]

HS: Okay.

TS: So in and out of the University of Chicago and UCLA and L.A. City College and the like. And I really never worked up to my intellectual capacity and wasn't a very good student. A lot of personal things kind of percolating for me. But now I was married and much more secure as a loved person, and really ready to finish my undergrad work so I did still at the university to finish - Chicago to finish up. And then when I went into graduate work, I was really ready to be, you know - and I was an able student and very interested and worked things around so I could do the things that I was interested in.

A good example would be I took a class in - there was a woman who wrote a book for - predominately for social work counselors called, *The Family in a Money World*, and it

had to do with how people - how people's family and psychological relationships were affected by money and it is such a major thing in our culture and - economic and so forth. So I wasn't interested in one-to-one family case work stuff, which was what her book was really about. But I was in - she's the one that wrote the book. I was really interested in taking the class, so I went up to her and I said, you know, for my project, whatever, I'd really like to do something about economics, and kind of public policy in economics rather than, you know, the micro level of the family. So she said that's fine, you know, I will help you with that, whatever.

So she introduced me to an economist at the University of Southern California named Spencer Pollard, who was kind of a - a neoliberal economist. He was pretty liberal for USC. He was kind of a Galbraithian mode, a little to the right of Galbraith, if I would guess. By no means was he anything but a - kind of a moderate, bourgeois economist. He wasn't a Marxist or anywhere near it, but he was pretty far out for USC. And so I - he got me to read Galbraith and so forth, and I looked at the economics of public social policy for this class that everyone else was looking at, you know, money as a dynamic and family relations. And that was an example of really making good use of a class, and a relationship with the instructor and reaching out beyond social work school and reading the affluent society, which was the Galbraithian analysis of what was happening in capitalism at the time from a liberal kind of a point of view. So that was very - you know, that - that would be an example.

The other kind of example of something that happened to me through - really kind of an organizing tale - there's really a marvelous student who was a friend of mine named Tomás Ascensio, and he was from New Mexico. Very bright. And his interest was in - he was a case work student, and his interest was in philosophy and particularly kind of the philosophical aspect of human relationships and - very bright, interesting guy. But he and I were both kind of socially conscious, and one of the things that was going on at the time was there was a farm labor strike in the Imperial Valley in the - it was organized by the packing house workers -

HS: Really? This was about '61, in that range?

TS: Yeah. And they started to try to raise some money and consciousness and do some campus work. And the organizer, packing house worker organizer, was a guy named Eddie Perez and somehow he got in - we got in touch with him or he got in touch with Tomás or - and I got in it. And we organized up like a meeting to raise money on the campus, which was considered a very bold and very radical thing to do -

HS: Oh, yeah, at that point at USC -

TS: - and the rallying cry of the strike was a dollar twenty-five an hour, which is what they

were struggling to get. They weren't getting a dollar twenty-five an hour. And so I think they had a little - a little film they showed and we collected up some money and they later told us that the school was very just - not the social work school, but the powers that be at SC were very concerned about this radical activity and the inviting of this packing house worker organizer and support for the farm worker and - you know, I regard it as, you know, kind of - this was just a little thing. It wasn't any - you know, I didn't think it was such a great thing with us. It's just a natural thing to, you know, want to do. But evidently it was supposed to be far out.

Then the other thing that happened to me there was I ran for - for the presidency of the social work class and I lost. And - there were two people ran, and one was elected and the other one lost, and the one who lost traditionally was made the program chair, and that's how I got into the farm worker thing is that I made that into a program for the - for the student organization. And so what they did in social work school at that time is that they had this whole psychological social work approach to you and they - they developed - the faculty developed an analysis of how you were as a person and what was going on with you. And so it was kind of like I was seen as, you know, aggressive and - and kind of an agitator and the like, and very egotistical. And then I lost the presidency and I became humble.

HS: [Laughing]

TS: They had this whole, very strange way of looking at things, you know, and I - I tried to explain to them, you know, because I realized my impact on others and blah-blah-blah. I said, well, you know, only two people ran, you know, one won and one lost. I didn't - I didn't see it the way they saw it, but -

HS: Sure.

TS: And this friend of mine - was my closest friend in school during [unintelligible], he's up in Sonoma County now - he was a very good athlete and he also was a musician. And so they developed a notion that his problem was that his father wanted him to be an athlete and his mother wanted him to be a musician and this created conflict for him and whatever. And in class, he didn't talk very much. But he was great. And very smart. And he used to - we had these papers, and the night before the paper was due, he'd roll a paper in his typewriter and out would come these papers and - you know, so they couldn't do anything to him because he wrote - did this good work. To me it was astounding 'cause I couldn't - it took me a lot of work to produce my papers, which I got good grades, but his seemed almost effortless.

So then we conducted an experiment. And we took this class together and he talked a lot in the class. So then it came back - time for him to get his grades, so I got an A and he

got a B-plus. And the comment on the grading sheet was that he had not participated. And it turned out that the teacher simply had taken the analysis that they had - the story and she just assumed that he wasn't participating. And I - we roared. And I went to her and said, "Dr. Malony," I said, "you know, I've been in a lot of classes with Jerry and he usually doesn't participate. This class he participated his head off and you tell him he didn't participate. Where is that coming from?" You know, "what's that about? You folks have got it wrong." And she - "I didn't notice that and" - [Laughing]

HS: [Laughing]

TS: We had a - we had a good time with her. That was the same teacher we had. My other favorite story is that this hometown paper was in that class. And we were in the library and we found a pamphlet that said, using the hometown paper assignment to have students do so and so on - and it analyzed this whole assignment and told where it came from and all that stuff. Well, they hadn't - she hadn't told us that stuff. She just assigned us the assignment. I mean, you could figure it out, but here it was like running in the library that is telling you all about the assignment that you're doing. So we're - we checked out this book and we're in the cafeteria kind of laughing over it, you know. And the teacher comes by, and it's the same, Sarah Maloney, and sees us, that we have this book, and she kind of blanches like we found this illicit - you know. So we go to the next class and she gets up there and she's very nervous and she says she forgot to put a book on the reading [laughing] -

HS: [Laughing]

TS: - list and it's this book and some of us might want to see it. And my friend, Jerry, and I were just cracking up, you know, 'cause we knew she had no more forgot that than the man in the moon, but she found out that we found the damn thing, you know, so she had to - she couldn't say anything to us, so she had to - she had to tell - but I had a good time.

HS: Sounds like you had a very good time.

TS: I had a good time in graduate school and was very happy. And Nancy was working as a child welfare worker in Los Angeles County in the - actually in the black community in the South Central area, and we - we enjoyed our life there and - and it's true that what happened at the end of graduate school is how I got into organizing is that, um, my first year in graduate school, my internship, was at a residential treatment facility for young people. An old-time one that was kind of becoming a more modern residential treatment place in Alta Dena. And they were very screwed up about group workers.

My friend and I were there - the same guy, Jerry - and we were group workers, and they wouldn't let us see the case records on the kids that we were working with there. And it

just was - it was like we didn't have standing as - as social work interns to see these records because - not because we were interns, but because we were working with groups and we weren't doing individual work and so they wouldn't let us see the - so the group worker - they did have a group worker, who was our supervisor, and he was kind of an ineffectual guy - and he said to us, well, I can't do anything about they won't show you the records, but I can see the records so tell me what you would like to know about the kids that you're working with, and I'll go in the records and find out. And I said, "I want to know everything about 'em." What do you mean? Tell you what I want to know - if I knew what I - what I wanted to know, I wouldn't know, you know. So we kind of went back and forth.

And we found out later that the school almost took us out of there over that issue, but they didn't let on like it was a problem. They kind of made out like we had to cope with it and, you know, whatever.

My second year I organized myself into a really good placement, working with - with a sister agency to the one that Nancy had worked with, with gang groups, and worked in West L.A. and with pre-delinquent and delinquent kids. And it was very helpful to my understanding the world because the kids that I work with in the institution the first year, were kids who had bounced around broken families and bounced around the foster care system and they couldn't tolerate living with a family, so they put 'em in an institution. And they - there were kids really emotionally seriously distressed kids. And you - no matter what, how you engaged with them, they were kids who were very difficult to get to.

Well, in the following year, I found myself working in the community with kids of the same age and similar backgrounds, and many from - who were not living in - some that were not living at home but were living with relatives, and some who were living with single parents and so forth - what the difference between the kids were the kids who had a connection to their family, they were there. And you could feel 'em and you could reach 'em, and even if they were distressed or upset or whatever, there was something there, much more than the kids who were - had been really damaged by their - so you could really - and yet, if you kind of looked at the lives that they were leading with their families, poor and chaotic and - you know, disorganized-looking situations, but it didn't matter. They had - they got something. Their fam- it was there. So I - I got a better understanding of how different things affect people and what - the nature of the strength that exists for a family even in poverty. Even in difficult social circumstance.

And the other thing that I learned there, which was very important, was that I learned that the forces which created the problems for these kids that they had to deal with and their families, poverty and lack of jobs and poor housing and all and lack of health care, and all the range of problems, the social problems, I learned that what I wanted to do was to

change that - that context. I don't want to help people cope with that stuff. And so I got a vision that what I would not like would be - I gained in social work school, both from the classes and - and from my work, an understanding of "where do the problems come from?". We actually had a great psychiatrist that taught us kind of - about, you know, the emotional psychology of people, and he had this great phrase and gestures - his name was Edward Stainbrook - and he said, "Where do the problems that people have - when you see people who have problems, emotional problems, where do those problems come from? Do they come from inside the people?" And he got us to see, no, they come from outside. That was very - you know, yes, they interact with genetic dispositions and, you know, they become emotional problems, but those are social problems expressed in - in people. So I got that straight, both in class and in the field. And I said, you know, I want to be helping people change these things.

And so I had lobbied to get this field work placement. It was a prize placement. It was a very professional agency, very good agency, and I got the placement and I did well in it. And at the end of the time, they offered me a job. And I went to interview with the director, her name was Margaret Budget - Peg Budget. And I went to interview with her and I said, "Listen, the neighborhood youth association has been working with these families, and these kids and these families for fifteen years. You're beginning to work with the - the younger sisters and brothers of the kids you worked with ten, twelve years ago. To the extent that any of these kids stay in this community - many will not stay, but you're soon going to be working with their sons and daughters. And it's not getting better, it's getting worse. And - so what are you going to - if I work here, can we change it?"

She said, "Absolutely," she said. "You can help these kids and we'll change the neighborhood," and this and that. And then she listened to herself and then she stopped and looked me in the eye and she said, "No, you can't." She said, "If you come here, you can help the kids, but we don't change the neighborhoods. We don't address these things." And I said, "Peg," I said, "I thank you from the bottom of my heart because that's why you're such a great director. That's why this is such a great place because you're honest and you're telling me. I could not work here and not address these problems. It wouldn't be - I wouldn't want to do it." So I came and told Nancy, I said, "I want to work somewhere where I help the people to fight these conditions. Help the people change. I don't want to help the people cope with it. I don't want to help the individual people do" - and I was really clear about that. I got to that point.

Well, at the same time, I took a class in community organization. It really wasn't an organizing class. It was kind of social work services and planning kind of community, or what passes for it in social work. And I took it from a lively woman at - who was a lecturer at the school of social work. And she was on the board of this neighborhood center, the Avalon-Carver Community Center. And it was in the black community in Los

Angeles, and she was one of the few white people on the board, and it was a black agency. And she had this vision that - talk about the love of community - that they should - that the staff should be integrated, which meant they should hire a white person.

So I became her candidate to get hired. And they had a grant, actually, in one of those connecting links. They got a grant. They had written a proposal to the State Department of Social Welfare where my father was and - to get a demonstration project grant. And the theory was if people got organized in the neighborhood organization where there was a lot of welfare, that by strengthening the fabric of the neighborhood, you would get people off of welfare. In one way, it was a fanciful idea. And good idea in one way, but another - you don't get people off welfare unless you do something about the economics. I mean, it's an economic problem, not just a social or political problem. It was good to organize the people and things will be better, but they ain't going to get off welfare if there's no jobs. But that was the theory of this thing.

So they got this grant and I got hired as a neighborhood organization worker at this thing. So my - again, my school time, not only did I learn stuff and get a sense that I could understand things and I could write and I could study and I could put stuff together, and that - not only did I get that, but I learned what I wanted to do and I got clear about that, and I got an opportunity - I was offered another - two jobs, changing things, and both were in black community centers. One was in Detroit and one was in L.A. I wasn't ready to go to Detroit so - and then I have this L.A. connection, so I went off to be a neighborhood organizer at the Avalon-Carver Community Center.

HS: And this is a - basically we're talking about 1962 to '65?

TS: '62, yeah. I graduated in '62 and I started my work in Avalon later that summer.

HS: Who now is Mrs. Opal C. Jones, executive director?

TS: The director, yeah.

HS: Did - is that significant?

TS: Well, Opal Jones, she was the director of this neighborhood center. And she's really a - a force unto herself. She was very - she put together kind of a kitchen cabinet of black leaders in L.A. that were trying to figure out how to be a political force. And on her board she had Tom Bradley, who then had just run for city council. He was a police lieutenant and he had run for city council and won, and he was on her board and was the chairman of the board, actually, when I was hired. And there were a number of people like that that were in Opal's orbit, and she and they were struggling to make a new professional and political contribution to the life of Los Angeles. So she was a pretty

strategically located person. Very lively woman. Came from Texas and via the School of Social Work in Atlanta.

And she had herself done this neighborhood organizing and this - what she called this "nasty little neighborhood center" that she ran. And she had actually been a close ally of - of Ed Roybal. Ed Roybal was the city councilman for the district in which this neighborhood center was in. The city council position that Tom Bradley got was on the west side and this was on the east side, east and South Central. And it was actually a split district at that time that Roybal was elected - had had South Central black population in one part of the district, and the East L.A. Chicano community in another part, which was Roybal's base. And Roybal, actually, had - was the president of the community service organization which was a very important organization that was started by Fred Ross, the legendary organizer, working for Saul Alinsky, who raised the money for it originally. And so - and all of these things had - you know, there's a certain connectedness.

And Roybal had come out of his work with Fred Ross as a leader of the CSO, and voter registration had been a major effort in building the political power of Chicanos. And he put together a successful run for the city council in this split district that had both a Chicano and black, and Opal was a key ally of his, and a key organizer for him. And the - the congressman from this area was really a legend of California politics, who had been in the assembly since the year of my birth, 1935, and his name was Gus Hawkins. And Gus Hawkins had recently left the Assembly after, you know, many years in the Assembly of California and gotten this congressional district. And he was the congressman from the area. Also close to Opal Jones. And had been succeeded in the Assembly by Mervin Dimally. And Dimally went on from that assembly seat to become lieutenant governor and also to become a congressman.

So Opal - and all these people - I don't want to say they revolved around Opal, but she revolved around them and they revolved around her, and this was - there was this politics going on and - and all around in this small neighborhood center, which was in the basement and subbasement of a church of the Disciples of Christ. A strange denomination for black people because it didn't have very many black people. The - you may recall another connection, it was Disciples of Christ Church that Jim Jones was involved in. But an interesting denomination. Their history has an organizing tale in it. The Disciples of Christ refers to the notion that they were dissatisfied with the structure of Christian denominationalism, and so they vowed to end denominationalism by uniting everybody as a Disciple of Christ. After they got going, after a little while, people began to see that they were - just simply had created another denomination. And that infuriated them because they had set out to do this other thing. So they refused to acknowledge that they were a denomination for a long period of time. Then sadder and wiser, they finally realized, well, the idea of uniting everyone was great, but what we really have done is we have our own denomination, you know. [Laughing] So I thought that was really funny.

And they had this - they were in the basement of a - of a - they had this church, the Avalon Christian Church, and it was right near an old ballpark in South Central L.A., Wrigley Field, where the Pacific Coast League Angels once had played. And the Angels were gone and the ballpark was still there and there was nothing happening in it. Opal had a dream of turning it into a multi - a multi-service center which eventually was realized. They tore down the old ballpark and they did build a multi-service center. She eventually saw that come to fruition. But it was a really rich place for me to start my organizing work because the director of the center had preceded me in organizing neighborhood groups and being involved in politics and had these connecting links. And I had this connecting link through my father with the welfare system, so I was assigned to help people with welfare problems, as well as neighborhood groups. And that put me in touch with what became the welfare rights movements. And so it was a very propitious job that I got, my first professional job out of social work school. And I stayed there for three years.

One time during the period, I used to go through the mail and I found an invitation to Opal for an interesting - looked to me an interesting conference on organizing. They didn't call it organizing, they called it community development. And there was going to be a first conference on community development in California. And so I said, "This looks very interesting. I'd like to go to this." So I pulled out this thing and I said to Opal, "Can I go to this?" And she looked at it and she said, "Sure, I'm not interested. You can go to it." So I sent in the form and whatever. Then they called her up. They didn't want me, they wanted her. She's African-American, she had this reputation, whatever, and they said you can't give this invitation to anybody. We just invited you. And they got her interested and whatever, but she was a good person and so she said, well, okay, I'll come if Tim can come. They said, okay, you can bring your neighborhood organizer. So I got to go.

And at that conference, they had - anybody that was doing any kind of community organizing work in California at that time, they got a grant from the Rosenberg Foundation to bring the people together. And at the conference as consultants they had Fred Ross and Saul Alinsky and, you know, some other lesser - some social work types, that was really - the interaction between all those people was very interesting. And then -

HS: Is that the ten days that you were with -

TS: No.

HS: Oh, this is different?

TS: No. This is different. And at this event, we defined what community development was

and we talked about what we were doing and we talked about different models. And out of it, the people who put it together, the lead guy being a guy named Ed Dutton, who was working in Oakland at a Ford-funded project that was similar to projects that had been done in the East, the Mobilization for Youth and other - Ford Foundation put money on kind of a juvenile delinquency -

[End of Tape 2 - Side 4 (B)]
[Begin Tape 3 - Side 5 (A)]

HS: Side 5.

TS: So at this gathering, comparing notes, people were there who were connected to farm labor organizing at the time. There was a guy from the American Service Committee called Barb McAllister, who had been involved with our - organizing migrant workers. The guy - he was one of the people helped put the thing together. And this guy, Ed Dutton, just - it just happened that his older brother, Fred, was a major candidate staffer, but Ed was a social worker who was working in Oakland in this juvenile delinquency prevention project. It had really kind of the same notion, spun a little bit different, that - that I mentioned about the welfare department grant that I got hired under. And it basically said that - in effect, that the problem of juvenile delinquency is a problem of powerlessness and community powerlessness. And so if you want to change delinquent behavior, it's not an individual approach. You need jobs and community political power and that kind of notion. And there were these projects in the East Mobilization For Youth and - and the Harlem Youth Project that had this - these kinds of theories. Kenneth Clark, a psychologist who was famous because he had done the brief for Brown versus Board of Education and - and my friend, Dick - later to be my friend, Dick Cloward, who was a theorist of this - of the mobilization one. And the Ford Foundation had put money - and they kind of preceded the War on Poverty, which drew from their - from their work.

And so, both in the farm labor organizing and in the neighborhood center/settlement movement kind of organizing work, they're - they're worthy - there was this notion of kind of social work language - it's bad language - if it's - talk about community empowerment. I don't like the idea of empowerment because it implies that you can somehow empower people. People have to take power. You can organize them and then they have - the power is the taking, it's not a giving. You don't give people power. So that's an Alinsky critical distinction.

Anyway, there were all these interesting people who worked the neighborhood centers or settlement houses or worked with migrant workers, had some experience with this

juvenile delinquency project whatever. And they were trying to explore what is this community work stuff about. And - and out of it came - the Rosenberg Foundation had put up money for this conference and for proceedings, and there was a little proceedings published and -

HS: Do you have the year and the name of the conference?

TS: It was the California Conference on Community Development, I think. And the year, now that's harder. Let's see - it started '62, must have been in '63 or '64. I think '63. The people that got together at that, then with Dutton as a principle organizer, figured out that we needed to have a center for the doing - studying and doing this work ongoing, and to make more of this organizing work. So we got a grant from the Rosenberg Foundation - we started and we got a board, and I was a part of the group that started it. And we got a board and the chairman of the board was Chris Hartmeyer, who was the director of the California Migrant Ministry, which had been a religious support arm for the Chavez work. And one of Chavez' lieutenants was on the board - a guy named Joe Padilla, and I was on the board. And there was a social work professor from Fresno, and a variety of people were on this founding board. And then we got a grant from Rosenberg to actually start this center up.

And then - and so Ed Dutton was hired as the director, and he hired me as the field director 'cause I was going to be doing and training and studying, and he hired a training director. And we moved to Fresno to start up this - what we thought was going to be a lifelong institution of the - the studying and doing of this kind of work in California. And it was just at the beginning stages of the War On Poverty, and so we immediately got some money from the War On Poverty - well, not immediately, but eventually, in a few months. And we got an office in Del Rey, which is just a little farm labor town on the east side of Fresno and set about to try to do more of this work - or this organizing work. And that - the whole thing was very exciting because we were starting something new and we were in close relationship to the Chavez movement, which shortly after we set up shop, the grape strike happened, and so we were involved up to our eyeballs trying to help Chavez. And the War On Poverty started and we were involved in a big fight in Fresno County about should the poor control the money, and we were on the side of the poor and also trying to get some of the money. And, you know, it was a very - the whole thing was a - you know, a whole - a very interesting experience. And it was a rapid experience because we got some - we got hired by the state director of the poverty program for Pat Brown with a doctor by the name of Paul O'Rourke. And he had been involved with migrant workers and was a progressive guy, and he hired us as consultants to go different places in the state and help poor people become a more active part of their local poverty program and whatever. And then we got a - so we got some money from him and we got some money from the federal OYO? [unintelligible] - to train people to be their own - like their own Vista volunteers, only they weren't Vista volunteers. And

we set up a program in - originally it was to be Del Rey, but the growers found out about it and we had to move it to Morgan Hill to Don Edwards district and [unintelligible] was okay around that -

HS: What's that?

TS: Well, the story is that we went - I always remember this trip. We went - we applied for a grant from Vista to train farm workers as their own Vista volunteers. So we were invited to Washington to talk to the head of Vista. The head of Vista at this time was a Kennedy cousin named Patrick Kennedy. And I went back with Ed Dutton and we stayed hours - remember they closed it shortly thereafter and then they refurbished. It's open now. There's a hotel right next to the White House, the Hotel Willard. The Willard Hotel.

HS: Oh, yeah.

TS: And we stayed at the Willard Hotel in its declining moments, before it got refurbished. And we went over to the OYO Office and we met with Patrick Kennedy. And he listened to our proposal and then he said, "You don't understand the Vista program. Let me explain it to you." He took a sheet of paper and he drew two circles and he said, "This circle is, you know, where poor people live." The words of the time, Michael Harrington, "The other America. This circle is where, you know, the people who decide things and run things are. The purpose of the Vista program is to take people from the power structure" - he didn't call it the power structure from this group - "give them the experience in the other America here so they will go back and make better decisions. The idea that the people in another America could be their own - that's not - you don't understand it."

We were just horrified by - you know, but he was candid and not self-conscious. I mean, this was - this is what he showed us. So we were about to leave sadder and wiser when - it was almost like kind of a guy in the corridor says, "Psst," you know, and his name was Sandy Travis and he was the head of the demonstration section of OYO. And he said, "I know what Patrick told you," and whatever he said, "he doesn't understand this stuff. I want to do what you want to do. I'll give you the money. You can do it under the demonstration project. Vista doesn't want it 'cause of that stuff, but we want to try this out, you know. We'll give it to you." So we were awarded this grant, two hundred thousand dollars or whatever it was, some big amount of money. Then we went back and started getting ready. And nine days later - oh, the grant was - in those days, the governor had to sign approval before it could come in the state.

So it came in the state, the governor signed it -

HS: Was that Pat Brown at that point?

TS: Yeah. And the governor signed it. It was all signed off. And the growers found out about it. And the growers found out - this group that - to them was just a part of the Chavez operation - that they're going to get this government money and this is terrible. So they went to their congressman. It was a powerful congressman named Bernie Sisk, in our times. His principle assistant, Tony Coleho, became a power before he left the Congress. So Bernie Sisk listened to these people. Bernie Sisk calls up - listens to these growers, his people. He's a democrat, but a kind of right-wing democrat - of the growers. So he calls up Sergeant Shriver, the head of the farmer's program and gets him to hold up this grant. We haven't done anything. We just had it for nine days.

So we consult lawyers and we get a national lawyer that says to us, "You've got a terrific case because the government's violating their contract with you and you can sue them." So we said great. But meanwhile the poverty program people said that they wanted to talk with us. And we said to the lawyer, well, great we have a case. We'd rather get the money than bring this great landmark law case. So we negotiated and I was very interest - it was a great learning experience for me. The bottom line, for us, was they said they would give it to us, but we had to - we couldn't do it in Bernie Sisk's district. They just said you gotta move.

So we said, well, we could move, but here's the problem. We had made a commitment to a Mexican Baptist Church across the - a little one-horse - one-street town, across the street from our storefront, it was a Mexican Baptist Church - we're going to rent their church for our training center. And some outlandish amount of money, three hundred dollars a month or something, thirty-six hundred dollars - and we said, "We're committed to that." And the church, on the faith of our signing the lease with them - they bought a piece of land, they're going to build a new church and - you know, we don't mind moving, but the money's got - and then we put all the cards on the table and we went back and I said, I don't know how we can do it, you know. How could we pay them if we don't use the - their facility.

Well, that was just stupid. That was no problem. They just cut a check and gave - you know, okay, you move there and we'll give you more money, you know, pay off your thing. They didn't care about wasting the money or any of that. So we got our money and we moved to Morgan Hill and set up this program and the - during the several months - or it must have been six weeks or something that we were negotiating about this happening, we had already hired one of César's major organizers, Emmanuel Chavez, who grew up with César, was actually his cousin, but people thought they were brothers, and Manuel was one of the principle organizers of the union, and we hired him and - as a field director, so this was going to be under me. So I called in Manuel Chavez to our little storefront in Delano - in Del Rey and I said, Manuel - and I had this great big desk that we had gotten from the Sunkist Growers, and my desk had a NRA Blue Eagle on it -

HS: Oh, my God -

TS: It was from the '30s 'cause this guy was just so proud of that desk. But I sat in my managerial style at the desk and I said, Manuel, we're - you know, we're working on this project now, trying to get the money loose and everything. We need to do some planning. Now here's what I want you to do. I want you to drop a plan - we hired him to work in the - in the Salinas Valley. I want you to drop an organizing plan when - if we get the money, you know, how - how are you going to proceed with the work. You know, identifying the farm workers and training them and doing organizing work.

Okay, and I said, now that's the first part. Now the second part is we may get the grant, but we may not have - get all of the money. How - could you drop a Plan B that you would do it if we got less money. And then I said, we're committed to this organizing work, so if we don't get the grant, whatever - we'll try to raise some money. What's the cheapest that you could do this work? He listened to this guy who didn't - compared to him, didn't know nothing and he was older than I was and a lot wiser and he listened. He said, okay, he would come back with his plan. So the next day he comes back and he's got a little spiral notebook. Plan A, I will - you know, identify eight farm workers and rent the - a storefront and we'll organize in the Salinas Valley and we'll have a secretary and typewriter and this is what it will cost. Some outlandish amount of money, thirty thousand dollars or something, here's the budget, here's what we'll do. Turn it over to the next plan. He said, if we get some money, but not all the money, I'll do the same thing for half.

HS: [Laughing]

TS: And then turn it over to the next page and it says, as far as if we don't get the money, what could we do? He says, I think that I could do it, you know, if I can get a gasoline credit card and if I can get my wife to go back to work. And then underneath that it says, "Please don't show this plan to my wife." [Laughing]

HS: [Laughing]

TS: Wherever I've told this story - it's really marvelous - whenever I've told this story - then Nancy jumps in and says that an outcome that connects to this is that when we - when we did get the money and he did organize in the Salinas Valley and he organized well. And one of the first contracts that the UFW got was at - at the - at a winery in that area. It's a - the one is alluding me, but it will come to me, but - so that was one of their first contracts. So when anybody says you can't organize with government money, it's not true. We organized that with government money and - while they're watching us, we organized -

HS: While they're -

TS: You know, while - I mean, the growers weren't watching us as closely because we had moved up to Edwards' district and we were working in the Salinas Valley and we weren't working, you know, under their noses - that particular nose. But it - we got this done with government money, and we got - and whatever.

But when we left - when Nancy and I left to go work for welfare rights after the growers finally clamped down and got this outfit - the whole outfit out of business in another year or so, one of the things that I did, as part of my support of the farm workers, is I left my gasoline credit card with Manuel Chavez. [Laughing] Well, one of the things he did was put a lot of stuff on that card, not just gas - I mean, it was not inappropriate, but he put some repairs, he put some tires, you know, whatever. So we weren't making very much money. And we're back in Washington working for welfare rights, and we're getting these bills and Nancy is just, you know, kind of - you know, whatever. So whenever I tell Manuel's plan that he thinks he could do it with a gasoline credit card, she says - she didn't know at that time it was going to be *her* gasoline credit card [laughing] that was going to continue his work in the - in the Salinas Valley.

HS: [Laughing]

TS: So, um, the California Center For Community Development, what happened to the center was -

HS: Yeah, I was going to ask you what -

TS: - what happened to the center was that we moved this particular program up to Morgan Hill and got going there. We - at the - about at the same time - I guess this was in 1965, was the Watts rebellion. And in the aftermath of Watts, the federal government came out to Watts and started spending a lot of money on programs. People told them that - the Office of Juvenile Delinquency sent out two people and they talked to a bunch of people in Los Angeles about youth social action training. So everyone told 'em the person you want to see is Tim Sampson. He's the one that you should talk to about this stuff. And he's in this outfit and he's up in Del Rey. And they said, well, what does a guy in Del Rey know about Los Angeles? Well, never mind that. He was here. You go talk to him. So they called up and said, you know, can you come down here, will you come up there - I said, I'll come down to Los Angeles to talk to you.

So I went down and - they were really good guys. Leonard Stern and Cy - his name went out of my head. Anyway, these two guys. And they - from the Office of Juvenile Delinquency. And so they're talking to me, well, what would you do if you got money

from the Office of Juvenile Delinquency - identify youth leaders, train them in social action. And so we invented this program. And they said, okay, well, we'll try to get you this grant, you know. So they did. So we got a grant to open up something that I had invented called "The Social Action Training Center." And it was to have young - young men and women from South Central Watts and from East L.A., and train them in social - in organizing for social change.

And we got the Southern California Council of Churches to put up a matching money and we got this program started. And I hired a director. A guy from Oakland, as a matter of fact. And the - this program started up. And in East L.A., the East L.A. part of it was connected with and kind of captured by the group that started the Brown Berets, and led into the whole activism of a Chicano moratorium and all the ferment around urban youth organizing in the Chicano community. In South Central, the group kind of came under and got connected to a guy named Ron Karenga, who was a nationalist and started a group called "Us," and got in a big fight with the Black Panthers and was involved in a killing, was sent to jail. He got out he's a - he's a professor in my union at - he's at Long Beach. And his - his claim to fame is that he invented out of the whole [cloth] - this African-American Christmas alternative holiday called Kwanzaa. And he was doing that at this time, and he was figuring out Kwanzaa. And he's talking to me about it. He said, "Well, we have to have a holiday. It's got to be our own. We've got to control it. And it's got to be around Christmastime," he says, "because that's when we need the alternative. He says, "I'm going to have it after Christmas because it will take advantage of the sales that way." [Laughing]

HS: [Laughing].

TS: And he found me all this stuff. And now, Kwanzaa is this whole big thing. Well, I was there with - with Ron - my sense of humor, his group was called "Us." It didn't stand for anything, but it was called Us. And then he had this motto, "Wherever we are, Us is." So I said, "Ron, I'm going to start the White Auxiliary, and we're going to call it Them. And our slogan is going to be Wherever Us is, watch out for Them." [Laughing]

HS: [Laughing]

TS: So they kind of got in a captured these resources and this guy was directing it was - so, you know, and so both - so the connect-up to the Center Community Development was - the California Center For Community Development was the sponsor of this program, and I was the person responsible for supervising it and still was working out of living in Fresno and working out of Del Rey. And so he had these young people from Watts and East L.A., so one of the things we wanted to do was we wanted to bring them up to our - actually, it turned out that because we gave the Mexican Baptist Church the money, they regarded it morally that we should have the use of their old church. So we realized, well,

we could - we can't do the other program there because we had to move that out of Sisk's district, but we can do other things. We're still in Del Rey and we can use the church facilities, and so we're going to bring up a bunch of kids from East L.A. and South Central L.A., get 'em out of the city. We'll take 'em to Delano and we'll have César talk to them and we'll bring 'em to Fresno to our place and whatever.

And so they went to Delano and César talked to them. And then there was a fight with a grower at that time named Pirelli-Minetti, and they had fine wines. And the action was picketing stores to get rid of Pirelli-Minetti. So blithely we planned to take our kids from Watts and East L.A. to picket on the Fresno mall, okay, the fanciest department store in town, to get the Pirelli-Minetti wines off. And so I remember we were getting ready for the picket and one of the gang leaders that we had in this program from Watts, an older guy named Butch, he's got his picket sign and he's putting it - he's putting the sign on to a two-by-four. So I says, "Butch, we don't use the heavy stuff for that." [Laughing] He says, "You don't use the heavy stuff, I be prepared." I said, oh, my God, we're going to have a - who knows what we're going to have.

So we're out there and the Watts kids are wearing the - the East L.A. kids are wearing their brown berets, and the Watts kids are wearing their Burn Baby, Burn, sons and daughters of Watts proud T-Shirts, and they're picketing in Fresno at the mall and the growers see this stuff and are told that this is being done - this is your federal juvenile delinquency dollars at work. [Laughing] You know, so we didn't want to get in trouble. We couldn't have done anything more - more noticeable.

HS: Right.

TS: So the growers found out that they had blocked us on one federal money fund, but here we were back again, you know. So they set out in earnest to squeeze off our - all of our money and we had not done what we should have done, which was to save money, figure out how to take all the government money and not spend so much of it, and we didn't diversify any fundraising base so as we couldn't get anymore federal money as the growers eventually finally found a way to clamp it - clamp us off at - on both these projects, it was pretty clear that we were not going to be able to continue as an - we thought we were going to last forever. We lasted barely three years.

And so it became time for me to try to find - well, I got to get a job, you know, so -

HS: Can I ask you -

TS: Yeah -

HS: - technically how the - the - you know -

TS: - they didn't take the money away. We just couldn't get it renewed.

HS: **Just couldn't get it renewed. Okay, okay.**

TS: We just couldn't get our -

HS: **So you just couldn't get your funding renewed. They wired - they wired the – political system in Washington -**

TS: Yeah, yeah. So we began to shut down these programs because we didn't have the money and try to figure out what we're going to do, and I realize that I'm going to have to get a job to support my family and - two kids and my wife. And so I had gotten in - I had been working - since I started at the Avalon Center in '62, I had been working with the beginnings of welfare rights groups in California, and that's really kind of like another whole chapter -

HS: **Whole chapter -**

TS: Yeah -

HS: **This happened to be also the period of time of the ten-day training session with Alinsky? During the California Center for Community Development?**

TS: Yes. Actually, I was in that ten-day training center when the juvenile delinquency guys called me up from L.A. to - in '65 - it must have been in '65 - to do the Social Action Training Center - what grew into the social action - I was actually in the Alinsky session at that time.

HS: **At that time -**

TS: Yeah.

HS: **Okay. Let's see. Before we go into the welfare rights organization, I guess we're getting close to the end of this tape. There's about three - two or three minutes left on it, so maybe we'll call this nonetheless the end of Side 5. This is the end of Side 5.**

[End of Tape 3 - Side 5 (A)]
[Begin Tape 3 - Side 6 (B)]

HS: **This is Harvey Schwartz. I am again in Oakland, California with Tim Sampson.**

Today is the 10th of September of 1998, and we are now going on with another session.

Tim, before we go on to another session, which would be the welfare rights organization, I wanted to ask you about two stories that you told that we didn't really get on tape that I thought would be nice to have there also. These related to César Chavez and the first one was a trip in a car and he tried to recruit you and the other one was a salt shaker story.

TS: Okay. When I left Los Angeles and moved to the Central Valley, to the Fresno area, to - are we getting it?

HS: Looks like it.

TS: Okay. To work in an organization that we set up called the California Center for Community Development, we had active ties with the then National Farms Workers Association that César's first formation, his union. And his vice-president, Gill Padilla, served on our board. And we engaged César to provide consultation for us and orientation for those of us from the city to the farm worker's situation. So my first session with César, I drove from Fresno to Delano where the forty acres, the headquarters of the union then, to pick up César to drive back North, up to Madera County for a visit that he was making up there. And he would talk to me on the way. And I wrote up a number of questions that I wanted to ask him and looked forward to spending this day of consulting with him.

And I drove down and picked him up and from the time that I picked him up to the whole time that we drove back up North and back then to Delano in the afternoon, repeated most frequently throughout the day was his efforts to recruit to give up the work that I was doing and join him in organizing farm workers. And his theme was very simple. He said, "Even you could get one farm worker to join us. And then you could get another one." He said, "One will drop out, but one day a beautiful thing will happen. One of the ones that you have gotten will get another one. And you'll have two or three and that's two or three people more than most people will ever organize in their lifetime." And - with variation and different phrasing, he spent the day relentlessly trying to persuade me to give up the work that the Center was to do and simply join his efforts as a volunteer organizer for what became the UFW.

And when I finished the day, I did get a few questions in and we did talk of other things, but when I finished the day I really felt that I had undergone a very persuasive full-court press for that whole time. And I've always wondered how my life would have changed if I took him up on it. But it was certainly a very different experience than I had expected to have with him because I hadn't expected him to be - him asking anything of me of that

nature. So it was a really good introduction to César's organizing methodology.

HS: Do you remember the year of this, approximately?

TS: It must have been in 1965.

HS: Were you tempted at all? Were you at all tempted?

TS: Oh, sure. I mean I didn't see how I could do it. I had these - among other things, I had a family and I didn't see that I could simply become a volunteer. But - and I had - we had established this center and I was the field director of the center and I - you know, I was - we actually saw the creation of the center as creating an enduring institution. It didn't turn out to be that way, but we had the hopes and we had come to Fresno, several of us, and then - to create this institution so that - it wasn't a propitious time for me to simply leave that. If I had been doing something else I think that I had been doing for a while, I think I would have been more tempted. And as things turned out in some ways, maybe later I might have been more - you know, life isn't like that.

HS: Right.

TS: The other story is really a marvelous story about a kind of strategy and tactics and campaigns. I was having a discussion with César -- it may have been the same day. I'm not sure. Or another similar day. And we had stopped to eat. And we had eaten our meal. And the table in which we had eaten had the plates and cups and saucers and so forth. And I was pressing César to talk about how you organized in a campaign. And so to illustrate his way of thinking about it, he took a salt pepper - a salt shaker and put it on his side of the table and began to edge it forward, pushing it with his finger. And as he pushed with his finger, the salt shaker moved through the thicket of plates and silverware and things that were on the table simply by as he pushed it forward, they parted. And he says, "You just keep moving forward and that's how you do this work."

HS: Did you at all think about the difference between his methodology of organizing and the methodology that you kind of evolved in - in connection with your thinking about Alinsky? In a sort of different way? You know, there's a trade union way and then there's the - the Alinsky way seemed to different to me anyway.

TS: Well, I don't think so. Among other things, Chavez gained a great deal of his background in organizing -

HS: That's right -

TS: - through Fred Ross, who certainly profited from his close connection working with

Alinsky. So I - I don't think of it that way. I think that everyone does the work their own way, but some of the - if there was an architect of the membership organizing model, the difference between the process that Alinsky used in urban neighborhoods and the process that César and Fred used in creating a union in organizing farm workers is that in an urban area you have a fabric of all kinds of formal and informal associations that people are involved in. And Alinsky's methodology strip - strip away the - his analysis of power, major contributions - strip away his lively sense of strategy and tactics, also a major contribution. But just looking at the actual methodology of bringing people together, his notion was to bring people together through their organized relationships with the church, with informal groupings, street corner groups, when necessary, to create block clubs or groupings for the purpose of affiliating with an organization made up of these organizations. And it's that - Nick Von Hoffman, one of Alinsky's early organizers, described the putting together of an organization as the stringing of the beads on a necklace. The beads being organizations, not individuals. And you couldn't join an organization of this kind as an individual. You needed to be a part of some group. If you weren't a part of a group, they helped you form your own group and then you could come in as part of that group.

On the other hand, farm workers, to create a union, you're creating a union of individuals - actually a union of families. It's not so different as it appears on the surface because of the fabric that individuals are a part of. Um - I'll - to illustrate that, I'll tell the rest of the story of the trip to Madera. We spent this whole long day going up there and what he did was meet for about an hour with a Mexican Pentecostal minister. And I - to talk with him about an immigration problem that he was having. And I said to him, "César, why did you take this whole day to go meet with this minister?" And he smiled and he said, "That man is going to make me thirty members." And that's precisely the same principle as Alinsky operated on. He didn't mean that the church of the minister was going to affiliate with the farm workers, he meant that the members of that church, the following of that minister, were farm workers and they would join the union because of his leadership and because he took - César took the time to help solve a problem and to accord that man the respect of - and relationship that started.

But it was clear - once he explained it to me, then it all became clear. So the development of individual membership organizations, while it's somewhat different because you're not affiliating already organized groups, you are working through networks and they make a difference. When I teach, I say to the students, you want to spend some time with two different people in this neighborhood and you knock on the door. How are you going to relate to them when I tell you one of them has lived here all his life and he has fifty-three relatives in the area, and one of them just came here from Louisiana and knows no one. Which one are you going to be most concerned getting in your organization? Everyone says, well, the one that's got fifty-three relatives. Okay, yes, generally speaking. So even if the other guy is dynamic and whatever? Well, maybe

the dynamic guy will build some relationships in the future. Maybe he'll contribute some other things. But if you're looking to build a mass organization, you're moving through the networks that people have, and family is a powerful network.

So César put together the National Farm Workers Association precisely that way. He went from town to town. He identified people. He found out about their networks. He held - his major tool, which had been developed and kind of refined by - systematically by Fred Ross, was the house meeting. And you identify a person and you ask them to invite their farm workers friends to their house. And it gives you an opportunity to see whether that person can attract some people, whether they'll do what they say, all of those kinds of things. And if the organizer already knows something of the person, then they will perhaps help them to contact the other people and so forth. If they're just testing, it's a very good test.

Manuel Chavez told me he used welfare advocacy and how he used it was he - a person - you would find out that some person had a problem with welfare and then he would say, "Can you invite some of your farm worker friends to your house?" And the person would say, well, yes. And you would say, well, if you do that, then maybe I'll be - maybe I'll be able to help you with your welfare problem. So then he would go and if the person produced some people, then he knew that's a good investment to help with the welfare problem. But since he wasn't a social worker, he wasn't going to help somebody that wasn't going to do anything for his work. And he was going to be sympathetic and maybe get some support and information to somebody who tried, but couldn't get anybody to their house meeting, you know. But the - where he would feel comfortable investing is where the person clearly had a network and could produce them and did what they said, and was regarded by those people. So that's not very different - structurally it's different because the people join individually, but it's not really different from the basic principles that - the Alinsky process.

I think there's a great deal of confusion about Alinsky because people - you know, Alinsky was a tireless promoter and - of himself and - and a lively agitator, and in many ways just kind of confused - confuses to this day people who don't understand very much about organizing, so they don't understand the nature of the basic principles that he was operating on. And then he'd purposely obscure some of it and - you know, so there was all - so there's all that. I don't - I think Fred Ross was much more interested, but it was also part of the nature of the difference between a rural farm worker situation and an urban neighborhood in Chicago. Ross was more interested, because of that, I think, in the one-to-one membership and the use of house meetings process than he was trying to get - weave together the bits and pieces of a - of the fabric of a - of an urban ghetto or a barrio neighborhood in a way that Alinsky had traditionally done.

Now there's some dispute about all this. When César was - when Fred was hired by Ce-

by Saul to create the Community Service Organization during the organizing, which in San Jose he identified and recruited César from the wonderfully named barrio Sal Se Puedes, which is [sardonic] en Español for “get out if you can.” Fred - Fred had started that work, and when Alinsky - Alinsky’s first wife committed suicide and Alinsky was in a very deep funk and really didn’t spend very much time with Fred - until the great success of the UFW, which naturally was - could then claim because of the - he had done some things with - with César so it wasn’t entirely phony, but it was really Fred - Alinsky kind of poo-pooed some of Fred’s work and said, well, he just wasn’t - he hadn’t been able to train Fred, you know. And that was just Alinsky’s, you know -

[Brief interruption in interview.]

TS: So I just - I think that there was a - mutual learning between the three of them, Fred and César and Saul, so, you know, I don’t - I’m not one that says, oh, this all stems from Alinsky’s work, or, oh, Alinsky trained César, you know. I don’t think it works that way. And César and Fred were very close and throughout their lives after their meeting. And one of the wonderful things that I was privileged to hear was when - when Fred died and they had a celebration of his life at Delancy Street, César read from letters that he had exchanged with Fred where he was discouraged and Fred was encouraging him, including sending him small amounts of money each month. Fred didn’t have very much, but he was sharing with César. And when César was trying to start the farm workers and - it was clearly they just had a wonderful relationship.

And, of course, when the [grape] strike started and the union - that effort took off, then Fred came and did training and worked on various campaigns and made a continuing contribution to the life of the union. But it - I think Fred developed his own methodology and things that he thought were very important about organizing, but that the principles were principles in common, that there really wouldn’t be big disagreements or, you know, kind of different approaches, so to speak. Different styles, yes, but the basic principles were very common.

HS: **Okay. Now, you get involved with welfare rights organization. In our last session, there was discussion about the fact that, you know, the organization was coming to an end that you were involved in. Money was being squeezed out of it. How do you go about getting a job with welfare rights organization? How does it come about?**

TS: Well, my roots in welfare rights preceded that. I had worked at the Avalon Community Center and got - been a part of the beginnings of the welfare rights movement in California. And when George Wiley, who had come - come to welfare rights through being involved in the Civil Rights Movement - he was the associated national director of CORE. And as the Civil Rights Movements cast about for ways to organize in the North, the Southern Civil Rights Movement was going well in one sense and was clearly

perhaps running its course in another sense. And they had began to look for issues and organizing strategies in the North.

And George came in contact through his fundraising work and his - kind of research with Richard Cloward and Frances Piven, who were developing an analysis of the welfare system and how it worked in the political economy, the findings of which were published as a book called "Regulating The Poor." And they published an article called "A Strategy To End Poverty", and the strategy was simple, to get people - as many people as possible onto welfare, overloading that system and creating the common sense approach to have some form of a guaranteed income. That was the outlines of the arguments.

But the attractive thing to organizers was that they identified that people were entitled under law to welfare and they weren't getting it, and therefore if you - if you pressed for them to get it, they could get it. And "it" was money. Money to survive for poor people and their families. And they had a line that - I can't remember the exact line, but it was kind of like, if you can deliver for people, that's the basis that built the building of organization. That's how the political machines in the - in the cities were built through patronage. They could deliver jobs and fix potholes and do those kind of things. And so if you could deliver money for people, you could have their allegiance and their activity organizationally. So that was a very attractive idea to organizers.

And a number of people began to experiment - first of all, if you worked in any urban neighborhood with poor people, you were already familiar with the welfare system and the difficulties, and you would try to advocate and found out that if you - that any - almost any advocacy produced results because the system was violating its own rules and the squeaky wheel got the grease. So that if you would raise hell, you would get - you would be able to overcome the system's ways of discouraging and illegally denying aid to people.

I remember they formed a welfare rights union on the west side of Chicago and boasted that they had won three hundred and seventy-eight grievances without any defeats. And - they were defined as a grievance. The illegal things that welfare did to deny aid to people or hold their check or cut their check or any of those kinds of things. And each case that they took up, that they were modeling themselves after a union, they called it a grievance. Each case they took up, they won, and that was the nature of the organizing situation. So a variety of people, students in the SDS projects that were based in Newark and Baltimore and Cleveland and a number of other cities, and social work students and social workers interested in activism, all - and church people and others began to take up the idea that the welfare system was a good thing to organize in relationship to it, and it spoke to a basic need for sustenance for people. And you could win. You could get the stuff. And so that began - that whole process began to stir.

Now I think it was jeweled in a sense of vision by the Civil Rights Movement in the sense that the Southern Civil Rights Movement with the large-scale efforts in - beginning in Montgomery and in Birmingham and Selma and so forth, were given so much media attention, and as I put it, if you're a young Presbyterian minister, and you see the head of your denomination marching with Martin Luther King in Selma, and you're in Cleveland, you can't go - everyone can't go march in Selma. But you could figure something to do in Cleveland. And if you turn to - who could you do it with in Cleveland? The possibility of doing it with welfare recipients was attractive for all of these reasons. And the fuel was not only justice, it was also, hey, I want to be the head of the church someday. Heads of church march with Martin Luther King. I've got to march with somebody. These people are at hand. I'm telling it with humor, but I'm firmly convinced this is how these kind of things happen.

So in - I was involved in the beginnings of welfare rights organizing in California, both when I was at the Avalon Center and then when I went to the California Center For Community Development. So when Wiley, in 1966, after the publication of this article, which Piven and Cloward began to get many requests for reprints - Columbia sent out thousands of copies of this article which was published in the nation - and these ideas began to stir for people in the ways that I said. And so George had already left CORE and decided that he would set up his own center. He had - after he left CORE, he had worked briefly for the Citizens' Crusade Against Poverty, which was the private organization that the Kennedys set-up. Kind of as a government in waiting before - and he had done a campaign to raise the minimum wage. And he had used all of his contacts in the Civil Rights Movement to get people to help with the - supporting legislation to raise the minimum wage. That gave him the sense that there was some networks of people out there and he - and he was affected by Piven and Cloward's ideas. They had helped support at CORE and they had had these conversations.

And so he set about to find out whether this constituency of welfare recipients and the beginnings in many places that I've described could be put together. And so Piven and Cloward got a grant to do some research on - to find out whether their analysis that there were large numbers of people who were eligible who were not getting welfare was, in fact, correct. So they hired as a research assistant, as part of this plan, a guy named Ed Dey, who was Wiley's sidekick who had come with him from Syracuse, where they had been together and been with him as an assistant at CORE, and then had gone with him to start the - what came to be known as the Poverty Rights Action Center, PRAC, and it stood for Anti-Poverty Civil Rights Action Center, and it was just George's little device.

So Ed went with George to set up PRAC, and then Francis and Richard hired Ed to be the researcher to travel around the country to check out the welfare statistics and income levels and get them the data they needed, basing their research. But the agenda that day, and - George had, was that Ed would contact anybody that was doing welfare rights

work, and he would find out who was there and all of that. So when he came to California, again, people in L.A. told him that I was the person he ought to talk to, and he came and stayed with me in Fresno where I was living at the time, and we talked. And so that was my initial contact.

And actually, George had - in that time frame, George had come out, I think - when he was at CORE or shortly thereafter to march in the first march they had on the Schindley boycott in support of the farm workers. So George had actually been in the state, and I had been at the march, but I just didn't - I didn't know him and he didn't know me. We didn't meet at that time. But Ed came out and - and that was the beginning of my contact with them and my - that led to my going to work there.

So do you want to change or should I keep going?

HS: Well, we have a little bit of tape left.

TS: Well, I could tell - I could conclude with a little story.

HS: Okay, we've got about two minutes left, I think.

TS: Okay. Well, my famous story about this is George figured out that he wanted to have a national meeting of all the people that were doing welfare rights work. And so he called me up. I was in a meeting at the Claremont Hotel, not far from here. I remember standing in the phone booth and telling George that we didn't want - we should not have a national meeting because our experience in California in pulling together the groups in California was we prematurely brought together weak local groups and made a statewide group, and it took away from local organizing and it was not the way to build strength. You have to build locally. And so I said, "Just tell us what's going on, George. Don't call a national meeting." There's a pause and George said, "Well, I was thinking that you would be one of the two main speakers at the meeting. You and Francis Piven would be the two keynote speakers." And I said, "Well, maybe one little meeting." [Laughing]

HS: [Laughing]

TS: Maybe one little meeting wouldn't hurt.

**[End of Tape 3 - Side 6 (B)]
[Begin Tape 4 - Side 7 (A)]**

HS: Side 7. Okay.

TS: So let me go back just a little bit before the - the August 1966 meeting - national meeting. What - the start of the welfare rights movement came about was after George had done this reconnaissance around and - with Ed around the country. What they - they had gone in the spring to a meeting at the University of Chicago School of Social Work which had a student faculty group that was called a Guaranteed something - a Guaranteed Annual Income Network Gain. And they were trying to advance the idea of a guaranteed income. They had a conference and they paid George to come to the conference.

And at the conference George met people from Ohio, which was the state that probably had more welfare rights groups than others at that particular moment, and found out that the Ohio people were planning to have a march - walk - for adequate welfare from Cleveland to Columbus to dramatize the need for a better welfare system in Ohio. The governor of Ohio, Rhodes, was a right-wing Republican, and actually preceded Reagan and Reagan tried to model himself after Rhodes in his approach to welfare among other things. And Ohio, although, you know, an eastern industrial state, had a very bad welfare system. [Interruption] So Ohio had a very inadequate welfare system and they had started this - what they called the - I can't remember the name of it, but it was a campaign for adequate welfare was the idea. And they were going to have this march.

And George's idea was that they were interested - at this conference that they were talking about, they were interested in getting support for people coming from all over the country to this march. And George realized that this was not something that could be done at this time. You weren't on the map the way the Civil Rights Movement was drawing to the - Selma and Birmingham and so forth. So he conceived of the idea that people should - all over the country should march on the same day that the march arrived - was slated to arrive in Columbus, June 30th of 1966.

So he sent out the call and worked the telephones, he and Ed, to let people know that this was happening. And on June 30th, 1966, about two thousand people from Ohio and close-in places came to Columbus. In New York City, which had an advanced welfare rights movement, they also had about two thousand people. And then in about twenty cities all over the country there were marches to dramatize the need for improvements in the welfare system. And I was in one in Los Angeles. We had a hundred people and marched to the board of supervisors and I tried to persuade the L.A. Times reporter to write that two hundred feet marched down to the board of supervisors, but he didn't buy my imaginative numbers game. And there were also small demonstrations in California in San Bernardino and in Richmond.

And George did a very smart thing, using the technology of the time. He got the press clippings from all of these places and he Xeroxed the booklet that was called "Birth of a Movement." And he had - Dick Gregory gave a speech in Columbus that said, you

know, there's a new movement and it's a human rights movement, and we call it the Welfare Rights Movement. So George put "Birth of a Movement" on the cover of this thing, which just was a collection of clippings and sent out many copies of this to announce that this movement had been born. And that became the birthday of the Welfare Rights Movement.

Then the next step - that was June 30th, '66. The next step was in August to convene this meeting at the YMCA hotel in Chicago, a cheap hotel, and people came again from about twenty different states. And I went - actually my father happened to be in Chicago at the time and we went and he took me to the Y Hotel and called up - George said to come up, so we went up to his room, and there was George standing in his jockey undershorts - that was my first meeting with George. Tall, just happy-go-lucky-looking, brown-skinned man, with a great spirit. And that was my introduction to George.

So at this meeting, the thing that I had been worried about did happen, which was that as soon as welfare recipients saw that there were people from all over the country, they immediately wanted a national thing to happen. We adopted what - at that meeting, what became the kind of platform of the movement - Ed Day wrote it with help from George, I think - and it was that our goals were dignity, justice, democracy, and adequate income. And I remember a reporter later writing about our goal said, you know, that these other things, dignity, justice, you know, and democracy, were as American as apple pie, but I don't know about this adequate income.

HS: [Laughing]

TS: And we had this - goals of the welfare rights movement were adopted and a pamphlet duly made and whatever. And a national - a plan was made to form a national coordinating committee to do the organizing, to hold in a year's time a founding convention. So the plan was set. Mrs. - there were several people there from California. There was a welfare rights leader from Richmond, Kathy [Hymes], and I can't remember - I could look it up, but I can't remember - but the key person, Mrs. Johnnie Tillman, who later became the chair of welfare rights nationally and who I had worked with in Los Angeles, did not go to this meeting. The plan was everyone would go back to their states and each state would elect a representative to this coordinating organizing committee. And the agreement was made that the poverty - George's poverty rights action center would serve as the headquarters for this national organization and formation.

So I came back and California welfare rights organization had a day of action in Sacramento and we were going after the legislature and the governor. Pat Brown had begun to turn his back on his reforms and move to the middle in the classic American dance to try to beat Ronald Reagan, which always fails, in my opinion, but that's how they do. And we were taking a breather on the lawn and I - of the capitol and I gave a

little report about we had this national meeting and we're supposed to designate somebody to be our representative. So a number of the people said, okay, you be our representative. I said I can't do that, you know, I'm not a - it should be a welfare recipient. And they said that's what we hate about you people is we're telling you, you do it. You're saying no, you won't. Listen to what we're telling you. So I said, all right, all right. And it was clear they weren't interested in this - in this national thing. They were in to what they were into. So I sent my name in and it was duly printed up by the national coordinating committee. All the other people were welfare recipients from their state, and me from California.

The next thing to happen was in - I guess not until maybe it was February or some month like that - it was '67, they decided to have the first national meeting of this thing. It was going to be in Pittsburgh. And Mrs. Johnnie Tillman in Los Angeles that found out about this and realized that this was really happening. She called me up and she said, "You're not going to that meeting. I'm going to that meeting." I said, hey, this is great, Mrs. Tillman. She had not been to the Sacramento meeting either, but she took charge and she became the representative from California. And at the meeting at Pittsburgh was elected as a chair. She was older than most of the women, and already a grandmother. Had a daughter and her daughter had a child. And she had come from Arkansas, was shrewd politically, bright woman, and she saw this thing and she liked George and she had her connection with me - her relationship with me and saw I was involved with it, so she got right in there and she became the national chair.

And we then went through an organizing process, contacting groups and trying to generate activity. And it all went up to the founding convention in August of '67, where we had about a hundred groups - several hundred people - a hundred groups and maybe about twenty-five or thirty states at that point, to actually set up the National Welfare Rights Organization. I remember the evening before the meeting at which they would elect officers, the leaders on the coordinating committee were very nervous because they did - they want to be elected and they didn't know how it was going to work and whatever, so Mrs. Tillman said, "I'm going to put George and Tim out of this meeting and I'm going to explain to you how to get elected." So we left the meeting and she figured out the coalition that needed to be made. She got a Puerto Rican woman from New York as a vice-president to get that vote. And she put together like how you would do it. And she got her friends that had been officers of the - temporary officers - they got elected. Later people accused George and I of rigging this election and I explained to them that we didn't, Mrs. Tillman rigged this. [Laughing]. We were put out. It wasn't our thing, you know.

HS: [Laughing]. Yeah.

TS: So that was the - that was the founding convention in '67 of the organization.

HS: Are you still - do you still have your other job?

TS: No. Here - I'll go back and tell you how I got there.

In - as it became clear that the California Center for Community Development was not going to get any more federal money, and as it also was clear that we had kind of come to the end of our major foundation money in California and we hadn't built any - any base, any bridges to a funding base, it was pretty clear that I couldn't continue to work there. I needed another job. So I began to look around. And one of the things that I was invited to do was I was invited to go to Washington to apply for a job with the poverty program so they would pay my way.

So I flew to Washington, but I didn't - wasn't interested in that job. I actually - George wanted to talk to me about coming to work with him. So I flew to Washington and talked with George and agreed that I would come to work for the poverty rights action center. I talked with my wife about it. I found it quite - quite an amazing situation. There was - George was spending, you know, maybe about ten thousand dollars a month and he was about three months in the hole, but he had great optimism and he was ready to expand and - you know, he hired me at less than I - a good deal less than I was making for the California Center For Community Development. And I asked my wife if I - we could go and she said we could go. And so - put my wife and two kids in the car and we went off to Washington to join the movement.

And since I had not been an active part of the Civil Rights Movement, it really - and this was a cut in pay, and this was the Welfare Rights Movement, it really was like going off to joining the movement. And it was really a wonderful tribute to Nancy that she was willing to move our two small children and to - you know, with less money and, you know, go off to - you know, the wilds of Washington D.C. So we moved in February and that was the - and that was the - it was kind of during this organizing year that we were building up to the national convention.

Now a couple of things in this organizing year, I brought with me this strong commitment to membership organizing that came out of the experience that I had with Chavez and Fred Ross. And I believe that we needed to build a membership organization like a union, and it needed to have a membership. And so I pushed membership and a membership system. And I also, understanding - in my understanding of the situation with regard to welfare benefits, was that the fuel for membership was getting benefits for people. So we designed a national benefits campaign and the slogan of which I wrote. Not one of my best efforts, but the slogan was "More Money Now." [Laughing]

HS: [Laughing]

TS: It lacked a moral claim, but the recipients liked it a lot. So we had the “More Money Now” campaign in the spring of 1967 was our organizing campaign. And the lever was fair hearings. The way the fair hearing - the welfare works - if you apply for something and you don’t get it, you can ask - there’s a requirement in the federal law that you can get an administrative hearing, which is called a fair hearing. And most states had fewer than fifty fair hearings a year when we started. And we determined that we could use the mechanism of seeking hearings that would produce costs for the cities and counties and leverage for getting what we - just not be - you would be turned down for something you asked for, we’d get a hearing. And then after a while, when they saw you’re getting all these hearings, they would give you the stuff instead of having to go through the hearing process. And they didn’t want to have hearings at that time. Later on, it turned around and they used the hearings as kind of to get rid of you, but -

HS: How did they do that?

TS: Well, they geared up to do hearings, and so then they would say - it’s kind of like the situation with unions. If you file a grievance and you don’t have - and you have a situation where the boss doesn’t really want to deal with grievances and arbitrations, then it’s a good lever. You file a grievance to try to settle it. But if the boss learns to use the system, then you want to get something solved on the - you know, on the - at the workplace and the boss just says, “Well, screw you. Take it into the grievance and arbitration system,” ‘cause they’ve learned to deal with that. So then - then it’s their weapon. At first it may be yours, but later it becomes theirs. And then it’s just to delay it. And instead of resolving the violation of the contract on the shop floor, they just kick it into that process and it takes too long and - you know, it’s why in many instances we have to move away from that grievance-handling process and, you know, say, hey, you can’t do that. Stop work and, you know, raise hell, right under - right in the workplace. Not file a grievance and take it through an arbitration procedure. It’s the same basic principle as welfare.

HS: I guess - well, what I - what I was thinking is if - if you go to the hearing with a good argument and the law is basically on the side of your argument, you know, what -

TS: Yeah, but it takes time -

HS: Okay, okay. I understand -

TS: It takes time -

HS: - I got it -

TS: - you know, all of that.

HS: **Right, okay -**

TS: It's all that process.

HS: **And then you have to marshal your welfare recipients to go to the hearing and get 'em over there and all - okay.**

TS: Right. And then the hearing is a legal arena instead of a people-in-the-street -

HS: **Yeah, right. Right. Okay. I see the logic of that.**

TS: I mean, which would you rather have. If you wanted something to happen in a situation and you say, well, we can raise hell with fifty of us and try to get it, or we can file a paper and it will take six or eight months and maybe you'll get it because you're entitled or whatever. Well, let's raise hell now. I'd like to get it now.

HS: **Sure. Sure, sure. Got it. I understand.**

TS: Anyway, so using the leverage of their initial not wanting their stuff reviewed in a fair hearing situation, and using the idea of asking for special grants for basic items of need - we called it the "Basic Needs Campaign." We said everybody should have a bed, everybody should have sheets for their bed. We sat around in George's office. They had it and George and I saying, well, every household needs to have a pail or is that a bucket. Which is it? A pail or a bucket. And we sat around absurdly saying how many girdles does a woman need. Three men trying to determine - putting on a list every woman should be entitled to how many, two? Three? Of these undergarments that they need. Who knows? We made a list and we had - and we said to people, if you don't have these items, then it's going - like your basic human rights are being violated. Everybody has to have a bed, everybody has to have, you know, a - you know, a change of clothes, you know, whatever it is, and here's the list and put what you need. And then ask the welfare department. Give me a grant to give me the basic needs. And if they say, no, they're not going to give it to you, then file a fair hearing. And you may not get all that you want, but that's a way of by asking for stuff, then you'll get something, whatever you're supposed to get. I mean, you can't play twenty questions, I need stuff. Well, no we don't give money for refrigerators. Well, do you give money for stoves? Well, I mean - I mean, it's kind of like - and welfare recipients has learned - and organizers, one of the ways that we got onto this special needs stuff was you'd sit around and you'd say to people, you know, tell what's going on with you and your worker and your welfare. A person would say, well, you know, my refrigerator gave out and my worker gave me money to get a refrigerator. A woman said my worker wouldn't give me money to get a

refrigerator. So we said, well, everybody should be able to get a refrigerator. And then we would have fights. We would go to the welfare department and they would say, no, you can't get money to get a refrigerator. I said, well, she got it. How did she get it? You know. So it was trying to figure out what could people get.

And this was a time in which the regulations were secret. The recipient didn't have the regulations. They didn't know what they were entitled to, you know. They didn't know what it said about the - what the rules were, whatever. And also, it was local interpretation. Just a side story of how things were, I worked for one summer as a child welfare worker between my first and second years in graduate school. And I worked with a woman and her son was not doing well in school. And summer was coming up and he needed a tutor. So there was a provision in the regulations that said if you have a special need - a special educational need, you can use money - in California, there was a system if the father was contributing, then instead of deducting that from the welfare grant, if you had a special need that was recognized, you could use some of that money for the special need.

So I said, well, this kid's got a special need for a tutor in the summer. So I went to my supervisor and I said can I get this approved for this kid. And she said, well, special educational needs are only to save money for college. You can only save money to college. You can't have a tutor. I said, well, that's stupid. It doesn't say that in the regulations. It says special educational need. This kid's not going to go to college. He's not going to finish high school if he doesn't get a tutor. It's stupid. She said, well, you know, it's not been done before and whatever. She said, but I guess you could write - they called it a gram - a memo. I guess you could write a memo. That was good because she doesn't tell me to get lost. So I wrote a memo to the head of the child welfare division, an outline. She wrote back a memo and said it was approved.

And when it came back approved, all the workers in the office gathered around me and said how did you do that. And I said I read in the regulations there's special needs, education. What could be more special need for education than a tutor for a kid that's going to drop out of high school? They said no, it's only for saving for college. I said, well, it doesn't say so in the thing, you know. And then common sense tells you that this is a proper thing. They said, well, that's very unusual. And I said to myself, well, geez, what kind of a crazy system is this that - that words don't say - this is how we've always done it, and when you look at the words, the words - and further, when you look at any common sense, you know, so here's the words and the common sense on one side, and the practice is on the other side, and that's how the system was. And unchallenged, you know, it just went on that way.

HS: Who - who had ever said - or what entity had ever specified that it had to be for college?

TS: That's just the understanding that had developed there. And one of the things - it also - underlying it was, since very few of these kids were going to get to college, they didn't have to spend this money. They just could deduct it from the grant. So if you had an unusual kid that everyone agreed was going to go to college, then you could get a special need. But if you had a usual kid that was going to drop out of high school, that wasn't a special need. I mean, it's how they, you know - the thing was.

So that's the way the welfare system works. Notice I didn't say "worked." That's how it works. And it was a system that steadily violated all of its own rules and all of the bodies of law about it, and nobody knew what the rules were. And there weren't any lawyers involved because no welfare recipient had ever gotten a lawyer and gotten a case and, you know, got in the court. So we're in this lawless situation. And so we resolved to use it to our benefit to try to get people to push on it. In some places, in New York City, which is where we got the idea in the first place, they actually had a fairly refined system of these special grants, and this idea of basic needs. And they had their own list. And we just took that - we didn't invent that idea out of the whole cloth, we just took something that was being done like that where you could - and the welfare rights movement in New York, the organizing had been fueled by the getting of these special grants for basic needs items.

And so we put together this campaign with the "More Money Now" slogan, basic needs, using the leverage, and we developed the material and we developed the membership card - it was like a union - a record card for - we had little stamps like old green stamps only they were little blue stamps where if you paid your dues each month, you could - you got a stamp to put on your card, you know. We invented this whole organization. And we sent out packets of - to start a welfare rights group, you had twenty-five people sign up and they each pay, you know - I can't remember even what the dues were. A dollar a month, and two dollars comes to the national organization and we send you a button and a membership card for each person. And there's a packet and it's done in groups of twenty-five and this whole drawing people together and affiliating. You couldn't join the national welfare rights organization as an individual. You could only join a local welfare rights group. Same like a union, you know. So that was kind of like the process.

Just as a quick aside, one of the things that we kind of thought about was could we get dues check-off. You would authorize a dollar of your welfare check, each month, would be withheld and paid to your welfare rights organization. So there was a kind of a little debate among some of the organizers talking about - and I finally said, you know, I'll tell you why I don't want this. I said, I don't want this on account of if we have these, you know, millions of welfare recipients and we get a dues check-off thing, who's going to come in and get 'em is the Teamsters. And the Teamsters are the great opponent of the

farm workers. And if the Teamsters can get this money, a million dollars a month or whatever, they're always cutting some sweetheart deal and steal the people's money, and we're organizing and we don't - the check off is not - we're not going to get it in the first place. But if we did, the Teamsters will be after us in the second place, so forget it. So let's just collect our dues and, you know, go about our business.

HS: Was this the main source of your funds for your staff? For the -

TS: No, no, no. No.

HS: Where were you getting it? [Unintelligible]

TS: Churches and foundations. A short answer. And some individual donors.

So the organizing campaign was successful. A lot of people got on welfare that weren't on. A lot of people got stuff - got special grants. The process went on and we produced it, we had the - this convention, so the National Welfare Rights Organization was launched. And probably a worthwhile excursionist would tell you that George was very inventive and smart as a fundraiser. He - when he was at the Congress of Racial Equality, he -

HS: Tim, we're almost to the end of the side. Should we - let's call this the end of the side. We're going to go on to the next side.

**[End of Tape 4 - Side 7 (A)]
[Begin Tape 4 - Side 8 (B)]**

HS: We're on side 8. Okay.

TS: So when George was at the Congress of Racial Equality, he had gotten in - and raising money in New York for the Civil Rights Movement, he had gotten in with a group of Jewish professional fundraisers who worked for hospitals and other such organizations, and had kind of like a little kitchen cabinet of those people. They really loved George and they were advising him on how to raise money from wealthy people for these causes.

So they would help him set up a - house gatherings for this purpose with networks of people that they knew. And they would help him with foundations. And they were tutoring him on how to ask for money. And George was a very apt pupil and after a relatively short time he really didn't need them anymore except for some of their contacts, but he liked them and they liked him. And they would go up to New York and

meet with him with his fundraising cabinet. And George would go to New York and raise money from wealthy people and from foundations and then we began to get some church support.

And one of the things that I - that amazed me early on was we went to the - a law firm that had also come out of volunteer support for the Civil Rights Movement and it was a Madison Avenue law firm and - doing work for George for free. And they had a big discussion. Again, George didn't have very much money, but they had a big discussion of the corporate structure and then we had the Poverty Rights Action Center, and then we had the National Welfare Rights Organization was an association in itself. And then we had - the fundraisers had identified somebody who gave George a foundation that they had set up, a personal foundation, that they had set up to help the Southern Civil Rights Movement. They had published a series of depositions in Mississippi called "The Mississippi Papers." And they had set up a foundation called "The Mississippi Education Fund" or short, MISSEDUC, M-I-S-S-E-D-U-C. And so MISSEDUC was a 501c3, and I was installed as the head of the MISSEDUC Foundation and I took one of these Eskimo - drawings of Eskimos shooting at ducks and missing, as the logo for the MISSEDUC Foundation. That was my - and we had - that was for the foundation to give us money through that avenue.

And then we had a line on getting government money. So we decided we would set up a separate government grant corporation, which we called the National Self-Help Corporation, NASHCO, and that that would receive our government grant. And then they - these lawyers in this meeting talked about - we also needed to set up a for profit organization that would make a loss. Then you can - people that can't deduct - they're maxed out on charitable contributions, then they can invest in the - in the for profit business and we would, in effect, sell them a piece of the loss. And they could have that loss to offset taxes and we would get that.

I had thought the whole thing was amazing since we didn't really have very much, but we had this elaborate - to me elaborate structure of corporations. And so I would go with George to New York to these meetings and the fundraising meetings and meetings with the lawyers and meetings with the foundations, and then I would do the staff follow-up, get them what they'd ask for, help write the proposals, you know, all this. And George was a very, very attractive and talented person for them to deal with. This is a man who had a Ph.D. in organic chemistry, had left a tenured professorship to - at Syracuse, to be in the Civil Rights Movement, had gotten to number two at CORE, had started his own thing. Had a wonderful spirit, really a marvelous spirit.

And although he was black, he - he wasn't hard to take or threatening to white people. He had a friendliness about him instead of a fierceness, and he, of course, was very bright. And so he was very attractive to wealthy people. And in many ways, he was

more like them than the brothers in the street. He would play tennis with them and, you know, what have you. It was a game that he had excelled at in school and so forth, and so - but he was deeply committed to poor people, and with the rise of black power and the celebration of blackness, he became very interested in - not from a nationalist prospective, really, but from kind of a cultural prospective for himself, as part of his roots he wore a dashiki and he let his hair grow out and so forth. But he never - that did - he had some of the trappings, but he was different, you know, so he didn't - he didn't - he just - and he didn't talk with the same - very often with the same fierceness even - Stokely Carmichael was not dissimilar from George. Very bright, educated, but Stokely had a ferocious rhetoric and could be much more intimidating. George just was - it just wasn't his [unintelligible] to be intimidating. And that was very helpful in fundraising.

Now he could - he could pass - as we could say, he could pass for militant. He wasn't a pussycat or something. He was fiercely for justice and a fierce advocate and ready to be in a fight, but he was - he just was really a remarkable, remarkable guy. So I had the - when I came to work for him, Ed Day was kind of his right-hand guy, and basically I kind of displaced Ed. If Ed and I did not get along, it would have been a bad situation 'cause it would have been, you know, kind of three's a crowd. But Ed really liked me and I really liked Ed. And so I -- Ed didn't really like to go to this New York stuff and do some of the stuff that I did, and Ed didn't have the organizing stuff that I had. So Ed started developing kind of the infrastructure. Worked on the printing and, you know, the materials and did a lot of stuff. And he, of course, was very - was close to George, knew him long before I knew him. But we worked well together as a team and that was a very good - that was a very good thing. But I became basically George's right-hand person.

And then the other role that I had was because George had actually talked to Mrs. [Johnny?] Tillman about hiring me, since I knew her - she knew me in California, he wanted to make sure that it was okay with her - she was a leader already when he was - she was very glad for me to be hired. As she put, I was a big trouble maker. She wanted to know where I was at all times. And she was glad to have me working there with Wiley, and I think she saw me as an ally and someone she was comfortable with. We were not real close, but we became closer. And I fit into her scheme of things. The other thing that I kind of thought was I was older than many of the young people that were involved in the movement, and I was married, and I was a man who was not on the make sexually. I was happy with my wife and I wasn't teasing the women along those lines, and there's always that kind of thing between men and women. And so in many ways for welfare rights leaders, I was a very safe person. I had this connection with their leader, I connected to George, I was a pretty solid guy, I wasn't on the make, I had a good sense of humor, they kind of liked - so I fit in. I fitted - I fit in nicely.

[Brief interruption in the interview.]

HS: I just was going to comment, you're called Administrative Director at that time? You had this title?

TS: I didn't have a title until later.

HS: Okay.

TS: So the other major role that I played was when George met with the leadership, the National Coordinating Committee and the officers and the like, I was the person that went with him, so I was kind of the staff person that worked with the leadership, with George. So - and since I had the relationship with Johnny and the relationship with George, I was seen as, you know, a partner in that process.

So I - later as things developed, I took on - as we got a larger staff, both in the headquarters in Washington and around the country, I basically became the chief of staff and I was the administrative director and had a substantial Washington staff and connecting links to an organizing staff around the country during the time that I had that responsibility. And then there's another whole kind of tale of what happened in that whole process. But in the beginning there was just this - there was just - when I came, there was just George and Ed and a secretary and a mimeographer named Fred Whittlesly, a kind of happy-go-lucky - actually he was a disabled guy and he was the - ran the mimeograph and that was what he did. And then they had - there was a couple that was helping George and his wife, Rita, with child care and driving their kids to school. And then George had gotten a slot in the poverty program in Washington for a woman with some civil rights connection to be a welfare rights organizer in Washington D.C. And that's what existed when I came.

And then it grew into a very substantial staff and I then I became the Administrative Director and kept on doing the work with George on the fundraising and worked with George on the - with the leadership stuff. But then I had the responsibility of running the office, and of being the person in the office who was the link to the organizing staff as George traveled and did fundraising and all that kind of stuff, so that's - that's what I - that's what I did.

HS: Did you have any connections with the federal system? I mean, when you're in Washington D.C., you're right there in the middle of all the -

TS: Well, it's interesting. I tell the - when I first got to Washington, I was really quite concerned about that. When I first got to Washington, George was preparing with a Washington welfare rights leader and with the attorney who was helping him who was the attorney for CORE, was preparing testimony for - around the food stamp program. And the person who came to give testimony with us was Stanley Laymer. And it was

really a very interesting event for me. First of all, we spent several days working on the testimony and then giving the testimony and whatever, and I was very concerned about it. And I told George that I thought we had no business doing it, that our job was to organize and that if we're just going to represent, we didn't have any power. You represent when you have power. You build power when you don't. And there's not a connection between testifying before Al's committee - Al's agricultural committee and building welfare rights in the field that I can see. And if we're going to spend our time testifying before House committees, kind of count me out. I - that's the wrong thing.

So George didn't say - George listened to me and he didn't say yes and he didn't say no, but we didn't do any more testifying. And the next time we went to Congress, we went with a large number of people and got involved only because there was negative welfare legislation, and by that time we had something and by that time we could also use it to build something. But I was very concerned. But I also remember it was really such an honor to meet Mrs. Hamer. And Mrs. Hamer said to me, as we were waiting to testify about the food stamp program - I was just going along really to observe - she said to me - just kind of chatting me up and she said, perhaps when I'm someday elected to office she would come and work for me. And I said, "Mrs. Hamer," I said, "when you are properly elected as a senator from your state, it will be my privilege to work in your office. Let's not kid each other about who's going to be elected." And I just felt, you know - she was saying you're probably a white person that's going to be elected to this and I said what I'm working for is for you to be elected and I'll work in your office.

And, you know, it's with sadness that she wasn't elected and she should have been elected. I can't - I can't resist the other - whenever I say that, I had a similar feeling about a really wonderful man who I had an opportunity to meet, not really to know. His name was Loren Miller and he was the publisher of a black newspaper in Los Angeles when I was doing the work there. But his history was that he had been a lawyer who brought the first successful case to defeat racial covenants - real estate covenants. And he was really a - a very important lawyer, but because he was black he never got appointed judge. Late in his life - and his wife worked as a social worker in the state welfare department with my father, which is how I got to meet him - late in his life, Pat Brown appointed him as a municipal court judge, and he accepted the appointment. I was furious. I felt this man belonged on the U.S. Supreme Court and I felt demeaned by the fact that he was appointed to lowest court in California at the end of his life, really. Somebody counseled with me and said that I was entitled to have my feelings, but he was entitled to accept this judgeship. [Laughing] You know -

HS: Sure.

TS: - you know. And I shouldn't get so huffy-puffy on behalf of - I mean, it's his call, not my call, whether he takes it. But I should - he said I - you know, I - it just - to me, filled

me with anger and pain that a person who belonged - should have long since been important in his profession, was reduced to having to accept a - and he was a person on the left. He - I don't know whether he was a member of the Communist Party or a fellow traveler, it doesn't matter. But it was a combination of race and politics that kept him from being appointed. And I suppose it was a good thing that at the end of his life, he was finally able to be a judge for a limited time. But I had that same feeling about Mrs. Hamer, that she would think that I would be elected to something before her, and it made me really sad and angry.

Anyway, the - all this was part of my education. When we did this testimony before the House Agriculture Committee, the other thing that was very interesting was you got a very interesting insight into the food stamp program because in the testimony in the - before the Agricultural Committee, the - there was support for increasing the food stamp program for - from agricultural interests, particularly agricultural interests in the mid-West. Corn farmers and those who represented them. And I said - I didn't understand. I said why would they be supporting expanding the food stamp program? Then it got explained to me. If you give people a little bit more food, what is the food that they're likely to get more of? The answer is meat. What is meat made out of? Corn. So in my sense of humor, and I suppose dealing with the pain, I said, well, they teach that you should try to get rid of the middle man and - why not feed the corn directly to the welfare recipients. And that's not so far-fetched because, of course, grain is a better strategy for feeding the hungry than meat for all of the reasons of health and efficiency and the like.

But in any case, I thought it was amazing how the complexities of these things. Also, cotton producers testified before the agriculture committee, they wanted a cotton stamp program. They wanted a clothing program for clothing made out of cotton. And so this direct link of using welfare recipients as consumers that I learned about by listening to this testimony and talking to Mrs. Hamer and talking to the CORE lawyer and George. And that day, together with continuing to be clear that we didn't have business - as much as we learned and as much enjoyment as I got out of meeting Mrs. Hamer and as much learning as I got, we didn't have any business spending our time and energy there 'cause our job was to build some power. And the power we were going to build was going to be welfare recipients in motion at their welfare departments and the streets in the city.

So I was pleased that George seemed clear about the organizing, and without any histrionics or saying that he would not do this stuff, he just didn't. He just started working to build an organizing effort. And when we went back, as I say, it was a different situation in about a year.

HS: Just for the record, Fannie Lou Hamer was real famous for her role in Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in Mississippi in '64ish, '5ish - about '64ish.

TS: Yeah.

HS: **She was also beaten up and became a martyr and became a famous figure. I met her once, too, in connection with SNCC. I felt quite honored also.**

TS: Yes. Great woman.

HS: **Yes, right. I also met Julian Bond who did get elected ultimately [laughing] to all kinds of - you know, things.**

I had a note here that when you're with WRO you - you also - there were also connections with the anti-war movement, with NOW and with the Church of Social Justice support activities and so on. Is there anything to be said about all that as time goes by and -

TS: Oh, yes -

HS: **- any experience - power-based expansion?**

TS: One of the things is that in creating the welfare rights movement, George was creating a base for his leadership since he had been a part of the welfare - of the Civil Rights Movement, hadn't been a - the people who were the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement were - Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Jim Farmer of CORE, John Louis of SNCC, and Whitney Young of the Urban League. Those were like the big four. And George, being number two to Farmer, came to some of those meetings. They had been to the White House and they were acknowledged. So George fancied himself as a national leader. So now he had created this movement, and he had a movement, and he was in fact then able to - in a shared way with the women, to meet his own needs and interests in being - continuing to be on the scene in which he had tasted. I mean, after you go to the White House as a leader, then you - I suppose you want to go back to the White House as a leader, you know. And if you're number two, you'd like to be number one.

George had lost the chairmanship of CORE in a bitter battle with Floyd McKissick and the race issue had done him in. George was married to a white woman and George was perceived as not black enough, and McKissick was able to ride the black power dynamic to being able to defeat George who had a real chance of being elected. In a really kind of interesting modern day echo of that, one of the leaders of CORE in this area was a man named Bill Bradley. Bill Bradley, now known by his African name, Oba Tshaka, as the long-time chair of black studies in San Francisco State. In the anti-apartheid struggle, when the campuses began to be active in - against the apartheid movement in - against apartheid in South Africa, the freedom movement there, students organized the march on our campus and we went down and actually were arrested in that effort. And I found

myself marching next to Oba Tshaka, who I had talked with at some point in my time there and identified myself as having worked with George. I knew that he and George knew each other.

And that was a very - the moment of the militant opposition of students and others to apartheid in South Africa, that moment was, in a way, kind of a strange and magical moment in relationship between whites and blacks. Somehow, once again, we were working together with some of the same civil rights spirit that had preceded the dynamic of black power. I found myself marching with Oba Tashaka and started to identify myself and he said, "Oh, I know who you are," he said. And then he said - and I thought a marvelous thing for him to say, and a kind of a tenor of the times, very comradely - he said, "You know," he said, "We probably made a mistake about George Wiley. George Wiley would have been better than McKissick." He said we probably made a mistake. And I said I was very touched and - because I felt he was really saying it as a way of reaching out to me because of my relationship with George. And I said, "You know, I think the fact that you could even - that you would even say that, that you would think that, augers well for all of us in this struggle. If we can reflect back in this way, and speak to each other in this tone, this is good."

HS: **Absolutely.**

TS: And now if he'd ever join the damned union, I could have a first-rate relationship with the man [laughing]. But in any case, George had friends - had comrades from that struggle and friends on both sides around the country. And I kind of felt like I got a little bit adopted into the Civil Rights Movement through George - I got adopted into their organic chemistry movement -

HS: **[Laughing].**

TS: - I got adopted into the Syracuse residents' movement, I got adopted into the Rhode Island ex-patriots - George was raised in Rhode Island. So through my relationship with George, I was - you know, an adopted son in these various - in these various other efforts. But I - the thing that I wanted to talk about next was really the - there's a kind of nice - a nice story and it kind of marks the end of the beginning phase of welfare rights. We had the convention and the day after the convention we brought in people from all over the East and Midwest for a march. And we gathered at the foot of the capitol and we were marching to HEW [Health, Education, and Welfare]. And my job was to kind of marshal the march - monitor the march -

HS: **Is this '68 by the way?**

TS: This is - no, this is '67. The summer of '67. August of '67.

HS: Okay.

TS: So I impressed into duty the few men who had accompanied women there. And I remember one dude who had a white hat and I said, "You'll be good." And I got seven or eight of them and I set up the march. And we marched from the foot of the capitol and down the mall. And then we turned towards the Health, Education and Welfare buildings. As the march moved forward, I realized I didn't know where we were going. We were going to go around one of the HEW buildings was the plan. So I said first to the press, I said, do you know which building. We're going up on two buildings. Like there's a building and there's a building and the march is proceeding. They said they didn't know. So then I tried the capitol police to make sure the police were there. I said, "Do you know which building." Take your pick. Well, by now the march is moving. You gotta soon - we gotta decide. So I knew just what to do. I went running back to Mrs. Tillman, who was leading the march naturally, and I said, "Mrs. Tillman," I said, "you've got these two buildings. Which one should we go to?" She said, "Well, I don't - she said, "Well, I like that one." She pointed to the newer building." And I said, "Okay." She said, "But where is the secretary of HEW?" I said, "I think he's in the older building." She said, "Well, I guess we'd better go to that one."

By this time, we're up there and we go all the way around the building and I look up - as we pass the doors, I look up and what is there -

[End of Tape 4 - Side 8 (B)]
[Begin Tape 5 - Side 9 (A)]

HS: Okay, you had just said – "I looked up and what I saw is" -

TS: Men with guns on the roof of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. This was the first time since the 1930s that welfare recipients had been organized and had come to peacefully petition their government, and they were met at their Department of Health, Education and Welfare by men with guns on the roof. The doors were barred to them. We put our line of seventeen hundred people or whatever we had around the whole building. And as we passed the front door, we plastered our signs there. And as we came around again, Dick Gregory, who was with us on this occasion spoke, again using the human rights - welfare rights is a human rights theme.

I was fit to be tied. I was mad as hell. I wanted to get my gun and fight it out with my government, treating people this way. And the women were bemused and kindly towards me. They thought - they thought that they did not like to see me in anguish, and so they

gave me - with a mixture of love and humor, encouraging comments. "Don't worry, honey. Don't worry, baby, we'll be back. We're going to get ours. Don't worry about it," you know. And they were bemused and touched by the fact that I was mad as hell about my government and the way that it was treating people.

This had been preceded by another - a few days prior to the convention, Mrs. Tillman and George Wiley had attempted to set up a meeting with the secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, who was a liberal Republican by the name of John Gardner. And John Gardner was really an intellectual and liberal Republican of great stature. And certainly a very moderate person. He refused to meet with Wiley and Tillman, and instead set up a meeting for them with the undersecretary, the number two, and that person was Wilber Cohen. And Wilbur Cohen and George Wiley later became kind of friends and allies. But on that occasion, Mrs. Tillman figured out that she was going not to meet with the head guy, she said that it wasn't proper for her and George to go and meet with the undersecretary. So she sent me and two law students over to meet with the undersecretary. When the undersecretary found out that Tillman and Wiley had not come, then he refused to meet and sent out two assistant secretaries. And taking a page from Mrs. Tillman's book, I realized that it would not be proper for me to meet with the assistant secretaries, so I left the law students and went back to the office and we all enjoyed the protocol maneuvering.

One of those law students, a guy by the name of Roger Warren, subsequently was appointed to both the municipal court bench and to the superior court by Jerry Brown. And when he was appointed to the municipal court, it was the first person that I knew and had worked with that had become a judge, so I was very excited and I was going around at school telling everybody about this guy that I knew that had been appointed a judge, and emphasizing that I knew when he was a law student. And a friend of mine - actually a woman from the Welfare Rights Movement in San Francisco, who was a student at the time, went around telling all the people kind of in my wake, that - explaining that Roger Warren had not gone from law student to judge in one fell swoop. That he had had a proper career as a lawyer. [Laughing] Unlike what - the impression that I was creating in my enthusiasm for having worked with him when he was a law student volunteer for welfare rights.

But all of this took place in the waning days of the Johnson Administration. In terms of relationships [to] government - there are many tales, but I would tell you just a little bit about the initial - the beginnings with the Nixon Administration. Nixon had appointed as his Chief of Domestic Policy Daniel Patrick Moynahan. Wiley knew Moynahan. Moynahan had taught at Syracuse when Wiley was there and they knew each other. And Wiley succeeded in getting an appointment to meet with Moynahan in the White House with several other welfare rights leaders. And I went to that meeting early in the Nixon Administration. The basement of the White House was set up in two wings, one wing for

Kissinger and one wing - the foreign policy top advisor and one wing for Moynahan. And we went to Moynahan's office and - there were three or four welfare rights leaders, Mrs. Tillman and several of the others, there was Wiley and myself. And Moynahan had a - an aid with him - I can't remember his last name, a guy named John, who was a rip-on society Republican, kind of as far-left in the Republican party as you could get, and very full of himself being so high up in the government, you know. And so he and I were the low-ranking guys. So Wiley and Mrs. Tillman and them conducted discussion of welfare policy and so forth in a friendly fashion, and John, whose last name may come to me, or may not - Price. John Price. John Price and I kind of talked as the low rankers. And John Price made the mistake of saying to me if I ever needed anything, here's his, like private line. Just call him up, you know. I thanked him and took that, you know.

So we didn't really get anywhere with Moynahan with anything of substance, but it was cordial and it marked - and although it came about because of Wiley's relationship, it also marked a - naturally a mark of legitimacy and respect for the - for the welfare rights movement that we got the meeting.

Well, about six or eight weeks later, a group of people came from Rhode Island from the Welfare Rights Movement, but they were coming around a fight that they had going with model cities. And they went to the Housing and Urban Development to model cities and they tried to get a meeting with the head of model cities. And they were raising hell there. And they called over to the welfare rights office and said, "We're from welfare rights and we're from out of town and we're fighting here. We can't get a meeting even with model cities. Can you help us." So I said to myself, well, I'll call John Price and see what can be done. And I said I don't know, but call me back in about a half hour, you know. So I called this number, immediately getting John Price. I said, "John, it's Tim Sampson." I said, "You said to call. We got people and they can't even get a meeting with them in the model cities program. All they want is to talk to the guy." So he says, "Well, let me see what I can do." Five minutes later I get a call from the people in - the Rhode Island people saying, "What the hell did you do? He's going to meet with us. The man at the model cities is going to meet with us right now." That's - this is amazing. Our welfare right - we really know what to do.

So I called John Price back and I said, "How did you do that, John?" I said, "Thanks a lot. How did you do that?" He says, "Don't call anymore." He said, "I don't think I'll ever be able to do anything again," he said, "but I was just lucky and please don't be calling me," he said. He was just kind of [frustrated] about the whole - he couldn't even accept - I thought this is pretty - this is pretty great. I've got this guy, I'll just call him up and get our people in. I knew that was not how it worked and that it was really lucky, and - but this number worked at that time, and the Rhode Island people thought I was really wired into the government or something, you know.

HS: [Laughing]. Did you ever have occasion to try again?

TS: Well, I tried again. I couldn't even get him again. His number was changed. And, you know, he always was friendly, but he never - he never did anything. He actually became - in the various maneuvers, he became one of the top domestic policy advisors himself in the waning days - in the Watergate days of the Nixon Administration.

HS: Sure.

TS: The other encounter that we had and the other process that we had in the early days of the Nixon Administration was Nixon's HEW secretary was Robert Finch from California. And Finch was a decent guy. Was certainly better than most of the - of the Nixon appointees. And we went to see Finch. And Finch actually kind of did business with us. He was kind of - he was friendly and whatever. And we actually - in the waning days of the Johnson Administration, we had gotten a major grant from the Labor Department to essentially monitor and train people about their rights on a work incentive program, which was the - intended to be the forced work program of its day. It became called the WIN Program because when they realized when they named it the Work Incentive Program that it spelled "WHIP," with a convenient addition of an "H" and we produced the leaflet that had a black welfare mother with a white guy with a whip, and they just freaked out and changed the name - the acronym, they just call it the WIN program for Work Incentive, but - and dropped the P. We called it - we continued to call it the WHIP.

But we had gotten a bunch of money from the Labor Department, our first grant for the National Self-Help Corporation that we had set up for that purpose. And we had done training around the country, around people's rights to fair hearings. This had set up a kind of bifurcated situation which the Welfare Department referred to the local employment development people, and you were entitled to hearings on the employment side. And then if that didn't work, you were entitled to hearings on the welfare side, so we had a whole series of workshops, teaching people how they could avoid being forced into this program, only to find out to our amazement and education that the recipients weren't interested in avoiding it. They wanted to get in it. They wanted to be in a work program. They wanted to get jobs. And they actually converted our lawyers to trying to figure out how we could claim that the work incentive program was an entitlement to a job, and whether we could have a cause of action on that. It was a very interesting experience.

Also was the typical organizing experience around the problem - the lack of problems in working with the government in this sense. We wanted to use this money for organizing, so we hired organizers around the country and told 'em just - just to organize. And it was just money for organizing. Had to do the show-and-tell. And I had to travel with the Labor Department monitors and go to the cities and produce evidence that we were

disseminating information and all those things we were supposed to do. So I - at first I was very worried. How could I do my work, which was to meet with the leaders and do training with the organizers and whatever if I was going to be shadowed by these Labor Department guys. We didn't trust enough to, you know, level with what we were doing. And we wanted to keep the money as long as we could and so forth.

Well, I went out on the first trip, no problem. They got - they didn't get there until 10:30 in the morning, and they worked for about an hour and took a long lunch and in the middle of the afternoon, went back to their hotel. I worked early in the morning and hung out with them a little around lunchtime, and as soon as they were gone, worked all afternoon and evening and we used the money fine and it was fine. That emboldened us to try to get money from HEW. So I was building an empire and I wanted money from HEW to hire more people for my empire. My empire consisted of - had student volunteers and interns and so forth. And I had broken up the whole country into regions and areas and I had a system like the State Department. I had a New York/New Jersey desk and a Mid-West Desk and - you know, and I had these - and if I could get some money, I could have more desks and more people and be in better communication with what was going on and whatever.

So we put this grant request to Finch. And it worked its way through the lower bureaucracy and got to Finch, and for a brief moment it seemed like we were - they were going to give us this money and we were going to follow the Johnson Administration, it kind of doing business with us. And then suddenly the signals changed and it became clear they weren't going to give us this money. And the hatchet man that was assigned to tell us that we weren't going to get the money was Fred [Mallach], who became a bit player also in the - in the Watergate affair. And so he said, you know - in a nasty fashion - there's no way we're giving money to you.

And so then we negotiated to try to get Finch to get Ford or some of the other foundations to put up the money in that channel, but they didn't feel that they could, you know, politically give us. And that came close also, and then eventually, you know, Mallach basically said, you know, get out of here and stop trying to - you're not going to get anything out of Bob Finch and you're not going to get anything out of Nixon. And so we kind of realized that we were at the end of that line of communication with Nixon - with the Nixon Administration, and I didn't get my money for my desk system and I had to make do with social work interns and - and what have you. And we also didn't have to get involved with the hocus pocus from the Neuvern Report around another government grant. But it was fun while it lasted. We did succeed in using the Labor Department that we got in the Johnson Administration for - for good organizing purposes.

So the - probably in a way, it's not ending one, but the next kind of phase of things in relationship to the government was that Nixon - Moynahan got Nixon to propose a form

of guaranteed income. They didn't call it that, but it was basically - it was called the Family Assistance Plan, and it was to provide sixteen hundred dollars as a basic federal grant for families. Now most families got more than that everywhere but the South. It would have increased the income of Southern welfare families. And interestingly enough, reporters were asking us about it, and - and I was saying that my analysis of it was that it was part of Nixon's and Moynahan Southern Republican strategy and it was a classic political strategy to buy votes fundamentally. And I said, you know, increasing the economics for - for state governments in the South, and aiding poor families in this way, this has a familiar ring, and there's an effort here to purchase the last available constituency in America, the working-poor, not only in the South but elsewhere with this strategy. And this is what the politics of the Moynahan clan are.

So the reporter said to me, "Are you a member of the Republican Wednesday Morning Club?" And I said, "Are you kidding?" He said, "Well," he said, "the analysis that you just laid out is what I heard at the Republican Wednesday Morning Club." [Laughing] So I wasn't the only person that was thinking in these terms, and it was a very interesting notion. So we - we were in a strange position about the family assistance plan. The principle was a good principle, getting more money into the - into poor people's hands in the South - we had a Southern strategy - the South had not been a strong point because it didn't have strong urban areas, which we were an urban base movement. We had a Southern strategy, partly occasioned by George's and others, you know, longing for the Civil Rights Movement, but - and the South was an important region, and we had our own Southern strategy.

So we wanted to - in that sense - to use the Family Assistance Plan and increase the amount of money and see what we could do with it. But after a while, it soon became clear that in the form in which it was being considered, that we really had to go after it. So I wrote the classic slogan of the day - not very original - "That FAP." And we went after it tooth and nail. What that did and revealed was the real problem with the liberals. The liberals - the issue - the fear, and the reason why we had to attack it was because if the federal government provided sixteen hundred dollars for a family of four in the North, our fear was that the federal money would displace the state money, people would get less - people's grants would be lower. And they certainly wouldn't be increased. And that was a big problem for us, where our base was. And so we were going after it. And the liberals wanted to construe that somehow it could be modified to be made to be a step forward.

And so the contending forces were between the family assistance plan as a foot in the door, or a foot in the butt. And we said it's not a foot in the door, it's a foot in our anatomy, in another place. And the church people who were ordinarily our allies and the social work people and all, they were enamored of the analysis that we should support this.

There was a whole big fight over it for about a year's time, and there's a lot been written about it. Moynahan wrote about it. It was supposed to be kind of like Moynahan's crowning achievement. It didn't turn out that way. And there was a journalist, a Los Angeles Times journalist and his wife wrote a book about it. Burke, was his name. Vincent Burke and his wife. And they called it "Nixon's - Nixon's Good Deed," and how - it recounts how Moynahan was able to persuade Nixon that this would be a good thing for him to improve the country's welfare system in this innovative way.

Well, when the thing got out into the political wars, the right-wing of the Republican party hated it. And so the coalition was between moderate Republicans and - and the Democratic liberals. And we hated it. So, you know, it was strange bedfellows so to speak, and then you paid your money and you take your choice, whether our attack on it killed it or whether ultimately the Republican conservatives eventually persuaded Nixon not to support it, which Nixon really didn't wind up supporting it. So when push came to shove, it went down the tubes and Moynahan's dream was lost and those people that thought it would have been a good entry point for some more federal floor guaranteed income system, you know, thought we had done the wrong thing, and there was a whole to do about it. The Family Assistance Plan was a - you know, a major - a major kind of policy thing.

One of the interesting sidelights is when Nixon went on television to tell about the Family Assistance Plan, later on when you look at the welfare statistics, you find a spike in the number of people on welfare for the month after Nixon's speech. People thought because of our ignorance, when a president says I'm proposing a so-and-so, the next day people went to apply for it. And there's a spike in the number of people on welfare that correlates with that speech.

HS: That's interesting.

TS: The immediate aftermath of that speech. A fascinating notion. And so this whole fight over the - over welfare policy, the good part of it was that if you're having a national fight over welfare policy and you're the Welfare Rights Organization, that's good. And in certain ways, it extended the life of the welfare issue on the national scene, that we kind of caught that wave. We helped create it and we caught it and we rode it for as long as you could ride it. But basically, the tide had begun to ebb, and after the Family Assistance Plan went down, the high tide of the movement politically was at the Democratic Convention in which McGovern was nominated in Miami, we got about forty percent of the votes in the convention for a guaranteed adequate income plank for the Democratic party. But that was really kind of an anomaly of a convention. It was the convention that followed the '68 convention - it was the '72 convention, and it used the rules of the '64 and '68 changes, and was a very liberal convention and nominated

George McGovern. And still we couldn't get a majority for a guaranteed adequate income.

Immediately after that - after the '72 - I had left in '70, I just say in passing, but I'm kind of telling the quick - it's overview here, the - immediately after that, in the early - or at that time. I don't have an exact time of this. In the early 70s. There had been a major national fight around - in Nevada, in Las Vegas, around Nevada's efforts to cut people off of welfare. And George had led civil rights style welfare rights marches for over several weeks. Ultimately, a combination of week-old tactics and public tactics and welfare recipient marches on the gambling strip and all of that stuff, succeeded in forestalling and turning around the worst of Nevada's efforts to attack welfare recipients.

But by that time, by the early 70s, the - '71, '72 - the movement had begun to wane. The country had lost interest in the welfare issue the way that the funders had lost interest in the welfare issue. George had seen that you needed to create a broader movement, and he was able to conceptualize that and to leave the National Welfare Rights Organization to start that movement which he spoke of as the Movement For Economic Justice. And his vision was - and this tells you something about the coalitional politics of the time of the welfare rights movement - we really - welfare women, poor women across the country organized and built a strong struggle, but really fundamentally lacked allies. Labor was quiescent. There was no visible labor ferment at that time, no labor movement to ally with. We got a little support from the UAW and the Teamsters around poverty program stuff. But there just really wasn't anything cooking other than the farm worker stuff, which we were connected with.

The Women's Movement had begun to rise and we got support from the beginnings of the Women's Movement. I discovered one day that I was working for a national women's organization. All these people in welfare rights were women and, you know - so I sent out a mailing to all the women's organizations headquartered in Washington, asking for help from our sisters. We did get some help from the Methodist women. It was mainly through the church angle. And we did have a tie through George's Syracuse connection with some of the founders of NOW, with the National Organization of Women. But they didn't have very much. We didn't have very much. And there - we tried to tie in with the National Tenants organizing effort that had come out of Harlem and the New York rent strikes at the time, but they weren't able to get very much going. There really wasn't enough to be able to put together the coalition.

And George saw that you had to organize working people, low-income workers, you know, across color lines as we were doing welfare rights, and that you had to broaden that out and that he couldn't do that by focusing exclusively on welfare rights. And so he turned the welfare rights movement over. There was also an internal dynamic where the women themselves getting ready for the staff positions, you know. And so he made the

jump of telling them he was going to go on to start the movement for economic justice and they took over the welfare rights movement, but the support wasn't there to really continue it. George started the Movement For Economic Justice and shortly thereafter had an interesting kind of turning point in his life, he was killed in a tragic boating accident. And it's an interesting tale in itself, a brief story. But -

HS: I think we're at the end of the side.

[End of Tape 5 - Side 9 (A)]

[Begin Tape 5 - Side 10 (B)]

HS: Side 10. Okay.

TS: So George began to move towards starting a broader - what we talked about at the time as kind of a majority coalition, of a majority of Americans for economic justice. I didn't like the phrase economic justice. I was riding downtown to a meeting with George around this new effort on a train from Philadelphia, and I was kind of noodling about what could we do. The name that I preferred had been coopted. There was an organization near Boston Chelsea, called itself Chelsea Fair Share, and I liked that. But United Way had kind of taken the slogan of Fair Share for United Way fundraising, so I was trying to noodle - I thought Economic Justice was kind of intellectual sounding and it wouldn't be what ordinary people would talk about. So I was looking for, you know, for plain - more plain language. So as I was noodling, I wrote the slogan that probably will outlive me and be my major contribution to history, "Robin Hood Was Right." So that was my evocation. We couldn't call it the Robin Hood Movement, but that - that slogan was written on that - as I was coming to meet with George about what we came to call the MEJ, the Movement for Economic Justice.

HS: I was going to ask you about that slogan at some point.

TS: We had - when I had come to San Francisco State in 1970, one of the things I did in that first year is I had a conference here on welfare reform issues, and I got Phil Burton and I got George Wiley, and I got Local 535 to come and - to discuss the various stakes of constituencies and welfare issues and the university sponsored and whatever. And in 19 - I guess it - I think it was in '72 - in the summer of '72, it must have been after the Democratic convention. Sometime in there. Maybe I'm a little hazy. I'd have to look 'em up - there was the National Welfare Rights Organization convention. And at that convention there were three major speakers, Ralph Abernathy of SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference), Jesse Jackson of his operation, Bread Basket, and George Wiley of the Movement for Economic Justice, [the] favorites had come home to

speak to the welfare rights people.

And it was very interesting. I went and - to this convention. And Abernathy had just announced that he was resigning as head of SCLC, and he gave a very sentimental sermon in his style on his career in civil rights. And Jesse Jackson, the rising star, gave a typical Jesse Jackson speech. And then came George Wiley. And we were - want the staff to stand in the back of the room when George spoke and kind of make jokes. One of the things that we would joke about is that George kind of fancied himself as kind of an orator like a civil rights leader or like a preacher, but he really wasn't. So he would kind of affect a certain style that he thought that's how you did it. And so we'd kind of make a little fun of that. And I was in the back and I was doing that with some people.

But then I paused to listen. And I said, you know, it's very interesting. George is adopting the style of a preacher, but he's not a preacher. When you - when Abernathy spoke, he's a preacher. When Jesse Jackson spoke, he's a preacher. And they stirred and moved people. George is not a preacher, he's a teacher. He is teaching these women about the economics of America and what kind of a movement it's going to take. And he was giving his standard stump speech about economic justice and lack thereof in America. And the women didn't really care so much about the education they were getting, they just loved George, and not the least of which they loved, he was a good-looking African-American man and beloved to them. And they were just really - just enjoying it. But I was listening to it in a way for the first time, in recent times as I had not been working every day with George, and saying - and having the insight, this man is a teacher. When he speaks, he's teaching. There's a substance here, that's different. It's not that Abernathy and Jesse Jackson - they're very skillful speakers, but they don't have the same substance. Wiley has the substance.

It was very interesting because shortly thereafter, George had bought an old - you know, not decrepit, but an older boat. It was a power boat. And he'd taken his two kids out on Chesapeake Bay for an outing and they were, you know, I don't know, seven or eight miles from the shore, and the water was choppy. And George went along the side of the boat to get up toward the front for something - or to the back, I don't know really know which - and the boat pitched and he fell against the rail. The rail broke and in one of those inexplicable things, the broken rail - his life jacket caught on the broken rail and he fell into the Chesapeake Bay without a life jacket, in - not a stormy sea, but a - you know, a choppy sea and it was cold. And the boat kept going forward and had these two small kids on it. And George hollered to the kids and the kids were able to - let's see, this was in about '72, so the kids were - let's see '63 to '70 - his kids must have been nine and seven, something like that. And the kids were able to turn the boat and get it turned around, but they couldn't find their father. And they were able to get the boat back to the shore and George's body was found.

It was not mysterious or anything. It was not - Daniel Patrick Moynahan made some God-awful reference to - you know, it wasn't exactly like this, but the famous Malcolm X, chickens coming home to roost kind of thing. He and Wiley had had a falling out and he made something out of this, which it wasn't. It was annoying. But the best thing that was said at George's service - one of his services, Ed Day gave a speech in which - a eulogy in which he dubbed George the master of the barely possible. And it was - put together this movement of poor women, which was barely possible. George had a marvelous optimism about him and with spin and bailing wire, he organized this effort and made it happen. And his great optimism, Ed used to say and said in this eulogy, George would - is the kind of guy who would look in a garbage can and say, hey, worms could grow in there. You know, it was kind of like he would just see the possibilities. And George really had that kind of spirit.

I often wondered what would have happened if George had lived because he was an actor. He was a person who made history. He was a person who organized. He was a person that brought people together, and as he brought people together, he never let anybody go. He - when he started doing welfare rights, he still was connected to the civil rights people he had. And he was still connected to his life before that as an organic chemist. We had a bookcase like this when we had our publications stacked up to send out to people. And we had nobody in the office. I would send out - the bottom shelf had his - had his continuing publications in organic chemistry. People would send in and say send me organic chemistry so-and-so. And I'd be filling these welfare rights orders and - finally I went into George as my joke and I said, "You know, George, if -" we were working, you know, eighteen hours a day on this welfare rights - I said, "George, you know, if you would work full-time at this and not do this chemistry stuff, we might get somewhere." [Laughing] Look I got orders for the chemistry just like I got orders for the others. He says, "Samps," he said, "that's how they do it, you know. My students are doing these publications, my name is on it, just fill the publication." [Laughing] I said, "George, I enjoy to fill the chemistry orders," you know.

But George was a chemist who saw how to put things together and had this art of the barely possible and the greatest spirit about it, you know, ever. And I think history would have been different, you know, had he lived. I - it's always - it's always a wonderment. I am happy to say at this time that his kids turned out great. His son is an urban planner, an artist and works in the schools in Brooklyn. And his daughter is a lawyer and works for the - for the Sorrows - for one of his foundations. And bright and she just got married. Came out here and had breakfast with Nancy and I. And his wife - from whom he had become separated before his death, but his wife had a happy story. She married a man who she had known in her days at Union Seminary in New York who had wanted to go out with her and by the time he asked her out, she had become involved with George. And so he missed out. And after George's death and that was over, then she finally hooked up with him and had a long and lively marriage, and just recently they split up

because they figured out that they were not the people with whom they wanted to spend the rest of their lives, in a very civilized way. And she went - she got into the art dealership business, a very talented and wonderful woman. And she just bought a house in Brooklyn and all - she and her two kids now live together in Brooklyn and doing well and whatever. So it's not - lives go on in positive fashions even after tragedy.

But we of the struggle for justice, missed the fact that George Wiley was cut down at the - at the time when he would have gone on to do some really interesting work in building a Movement for Economic Justice in this country. Which we're still struggling to - still struggling to build. So that's probably a good - we can do some clean-up on welfare rights next time. But that's probably a good place to stop.

[Interview stops, and resumes on another day.]

HS: This is Harvey Schwartz. This is the 13th of October, 1998 and we're going on with our discussions.

You mentioned at the end of the last discussion that - you basically discussed George Wiley in great depth and you said maybe there'd be some clean-up on welfare rights organization. Did you have anything specific in mind?

TS: Well, I could say - kind of tell the ending and use that to kind of locate where I am and what happened.

HS: Yeah, that's - I wanted to ask you about that anyway.

TS: I left welfare rights in the summer of 1970 to come to California to teach. At that time, what had happened in welfare rights was there had been a kind of a black cultural rebellion that took place about a year before I left. And in that - in that effort, which was somewhat puzzling to George Wiley, it involved nationalist - black nationalists on his staff, led by the director of the Communications and Print Shop, and really his secretary - attacked welfare rights for having too many white staff and volunteers, and not enough black people involved. In a - in a retreat format, there was a - I think there may have been picketing. It became public and it was kind of a crisis.

So George responded that - he was sick with the flu at the time - by essentially getting Albert James, one of the outstanding black organizers involved. And Albert was basically then assigned - I think Albert had come to work in the national office after working originally in Louisville, Kentucky, and then going to - to New York - and then going to New York where he headed up the New York welfare rights operation. Albert had come to the national office and been made the Assistant Director, and George got Albert to basically be the point person for resolving this major problem. I was a focus of

the - of the attention since I was the most prominent white staff person and was the Administrative Director and George's right hand.

In that whole process I learned that while I felt responsible and concerned about racism, that I was not guilty and I wasn't acting from guilt. I had not created the racism. I was effected by it, but - and concerned with ending it, but I wasn't guilty of it. It was very, very important learning for me. So I was able to handle the attack well and I really was indebted to Albert who stepped forward and bore, from that point, kind of the brunt of attack, which was deflected from Wiley, and to a lesser degree deflected from me. Albert brought his own people from New York into the national office, and two of them - two of the people that he brought in were black women from the welfare rights movement, Jackie Pope and Joyce Burson.

And so that kind of signal - now I'm telling this story not so much around myself, but to try to explain that what was happening in the welfare rights movement at that time was that the women in the leadership were beginning to feel that they should be the ones with the staff positions, and that they didn't need as many as white volunteers and white staff people. In the midst of this attack, the national leadership black women stepped forward and really led a counterattack on the black nationalist staff and said, where the hell were you when we were trying to get this thing started. These white boys helped us. They paid their dues. They did the job. And we're not going to stand for your trashing them. And I remember the coldest comment was, and one of the few times that the secretary of the [publications] director, who had kind of been the power behind his throne of leadership and attack, stepped forward and she said in a meeting in the office called by the national leadership to kind of read the riot act to these folks, she stepped forward and she said, "welfare rights is about dignity, justice and democracy. Where's my dignity, justice and democracy?" And Beulah Sanders, the leader of New York, an African-American woman said, "Wait a minute." She said, "This dignity, justice and democracy of the welfare rights movement is about my dignity, justice and democracy. Work for your own on your own time, not on my time." And I thought that was pretty cold, but - and at the point had, you know, a fairness and so forth. So I - but I naturally was joyful to get the support and we got over that.

But the handwriting was on the wall in a number of ways for welfare rights at that point. This was in the period '69 through the beginning of '70. And things were changing. And George was getting ready to - he didn't leave for a while, but he was getting ready to turn over the leadership to the welfare rights women themselves and he had his own - was beginning to have his own agenda which he wanted to work on. And so when I left in 196 - I changed from being administrative director to being - continuing to do most of what I did, but Albert was elevated to associate director and took on some of the responsibilities and I reported to him. I continued to do a lot of the work that I did, and I enjoyed doing it. Enjoyed working with the people who had come in, but I got this

opportunity to leave to go to California, which was in the nick of time since my all-consuming work had - I had paid the toll of not proper attention to my wife and children and it gave me an opportunity to - by going back to California and into teaching to kind of restore my family balance so to speak. And probably if I had not done that, who knows what would have happened, but I don't know if Nancy and I would have been together still. It was probably somewhat more serious than I took it. I was - but the timing was really good because George was in the process of trying to do a similar thing of turning over leadership to the women themselves - or that was beginning and that was a kind of the changes.

So I'll tell very briefly the story of how I got my job offer. In 1969, in the spring, there was a - there was a - actually it was in 1970, I guess. Well, '69 or '70, I'm a little confused. There was a national social work meeting. The National Conference on Social Welfare in New York at the Americana Hotel. And for several previous meetings there had been agitation around welfare rights and support for welfare rights from social workers. This meeting we resolved to do kind of a full-court press. We had our national leadership meeting just prior to this conference and we - we laid plans to have a major organizing effort at the conference to raise money and support from the social workers.

I was assigned the job of developing a plan. And so I worked with some of the other staff members and was the liaison to the leadership. And we realized that it was a time of ferment and others were going to disrupt this meeting, and so -

HS: Who were the others?

TS: Well, it'll come up -

HS: Okay. No problem.

TS: So I kind of negotiated with the Black Social Workers and the hunger caucus and the women's caucus and the radical social work caucus, all of whom were resolved not to have business as usual at this conference. So we decided that at the opening session, the various groups would stand up and do their number and I tried to position welfare rights to be the last in the line and advised our women that after the others attacked with fury, that they should adopt a calm and measured tone and ask directly for support, including money. And I thought that was our best chance to do. I reckoned without - I reckoned wrongly because of impatience. And so what happened was the opening session began and the disruptive caucuses took the stage, and as each of them laid out their angers and demands, the welfare women got angrier and angrier at them for taking their time. And by the time it got to them, instead of having the kind of measured appeal that I had hoped for, they were furious.

So Beulah Sanders, the leader from New York, banged her purse on the rostrum and said, "We're not letting you out of here until you give us your money." And everyone kind of looked around and - you know, we're in this ballroom, and - and various of the welfare rights people, including - I'll never forget, Francis Fox Piven, a noted author and academic, went to block the doors. And the women then started - the welfare women started to rage at the social workers and tell them they'd better get off - up off their money and we aren't going to leave until we raise fifty-five thousand dollars. And the social workers were nonplussed, or depending on their politics, outraged and started walking - you know, many of them started walking out. Sadder but wiser I was just kind of sitting there. There wasn't anything I could do, you know. I had to let the thing play it out and the women were running it and my role had ended. But people as they passed me, the ones who knew me, would say things like "this is not how to do things." You know, and since I had done the very best that I could and had not predicted this and - you know, whatever, I thought those were kind of like cheap shots. But I was resigned in saying, you know, tell me about it, you know.

A good friend of mine was standing by a friend of his. They had actually gone to doctoral school together, and this woman, Virginia Turner, had been hired - I didn't know that at the time, to be the new director of the Social Work Department at San Francisco State. And she was watching all of this, and as one of the people walked out, David Williams, my friend, booed his dean of the school at West Virginia for walking out. And Virginia Turner was trying to understand what was happening. She said to David, "What is it? What's happening? Why did you boo him?" And so he explained that his dean was a conservative SOB and walking out meant he didn't care about the rightful cause of welfare rights. And so she joined in. She began to boo her friends who were walking out, and she said, "This is great." She said, "David, who organized this?" So he said, "Oh, my friend, Tim Sampson," you know. She said, "I want to meet him." She says, "He's the kind of person I want on my faculty." So she introduced herself to me and she asked me if I'd be interested in coming out to teach at San Francisco. I said, "Sure, I'd be interested." And that was kind of the introduction.

So the way that the hotel handled it as a footnote was instructive of where we were located. These disruptions had become kind of the MTA of the groups in the '60s. This was at the end of the '60s, and what the hotel had learned was you don't call the police and make the confrontation or whatever, you were located in a huge ballroom and the ballroom was probably the size of a football field and we were just in one segment of it. So we were blocking the door - doors. All they did was take down the panels and so people could freely go and then they just kind of stepped back. And, you know, the leadership of the conference having been accosted before and also seeing that it was productive for them because people were getting mad at the disruption, they let the thing go so it kind of fizzled out.

Another footnote is that interestingly enough, it was reported in the news and picked up in the press uniformly, across the United States - we saw the clippings - every paper practically in the country attacked welfare rights for biting the social work hand that fed us, and for disrupting this conference. This is just beyond the pale. We never did anything before or after that that got more press. It just - total press. And total editorials and letters and everybody was opposed to it. A few voices saying, you know, welfare recipients are okay and - you know. But most people just combined their anger at welfare anyway with the effrontery that this group should attack social workers, the hands that feed them.

And the footnote of this was that we then went back to our meeting, and in our meeting, we were dealing with an internal fight with the Philadelphia group. And the Philadelphia group had been disrupting our internal leadership meeting. So in an unusual step, the leadership passed a resolution the text of which said something like no one is allowed to disrupt any meeting, ever. We had just torn up this other meeting, and now we're adopting resolution about nobody can disrupt our meeting. And, again, uncharacteristically, they typed it up and were about to distribute to the press when George found out about it and got the copies and took them away. It was just fortunate or we - not only would we have been attacked, but we would have been the laughing stock of the country.

Well, Virginia Turner did offer me a job teaching at San Francisco State. It seemed a likely place and it seemed that what I should do is return to my home state with my family and take up that post and create more space for the women themselves to run their organization. So I did so in the summer of 1970, and that brought me to San Francisco State in the fall of 1970, and started my career at San Francisco State.

One other kind of welfare rights footnote is that in 1970, in the fall, I believe, there was a major national fight over a Nevada effort to kick welfare recipients off the rolls. And George seized the publicity over this to mount marches and demonstrations on the Las Vegas strip. And so there was a running series of battles and welfare rights won the war, got the effort nullified and got a lot of press. And in many ways that was really the last hurrah. A vigorous public national effort. It kept me in touch with people because they all would come to San Francisco on their way in or out and visit it, and I was, you know, kind of a support station for the Nevada effort, although I was not involved in it.

HS: Okay. We're very close - pretty close to the end of the side. Let's call this the end of this side. Okay, this is the end of the side.

**[End of Tape 5 - Side 10 (B)]
[Begin Tape 6 - Side 11 (A)]**

HS: What happened to welfare rights organizations as a national movement after that? You mentioned it was kind of Lazarus, but what - just briefly, what -

TS: Well, quickly - and I generally say that the high point of the movement's political strength was - and as well as its limits, was illustrated at the Miami convention of the Democratic Party in 1972, in the summer of '72. I think that's right. The convention that nominated McGovern.

HS: Yes, that's the one.

TS: And at that convention, welfare rights succeeded in getting more than a third of the votes of the convention for its guaranteed adequate income plan of sixty-five hundred dollars by that time - I think it was sixty-five, or it might have been seventy-two. We kept raising the amount as the cost-of-living went up. And so that was a very substantial, but clearly not a majority, effort in the Democratic party at that time to recognize, in effect, the rightful needs and the strength of organized poor people.

It was shortly after that George put into play his plan to leave. I believe I have this timing of it right. And to start a Movement for Economic Justice, he wanted a broader formation that included welfare rights, but drew on other groups. And he had been trying to make coalitions with tenants, with white working people, with - merging and organizing other communities of color, and had really not been very successful at making a coalition effort. So he set about to create that kind of a coalition from outside of welfare rights and simultaneously turned over the executive directorship to Mrs. Tillman, the National Chairperson, and she brought in several recipients and a - a guy who was a former recipient. I guess he might have been a recipient, but he was one of the only men in the leadership [unintelligible]. And they began to try to continue to run the organization, but they quickly ran out of resources because - both because they didn't have the talent and connections George had to raise the money, although he tried to help.

But also because welfare rights had basically kind of overstayed its welcome as a national issue. These things are very fickle, and particularly for church and foundation funding, they want to be on the cutting edge and welfare rights had succeeded in staying there for quite a long time, maintaining the welfare issue in the public view, but eventually that dependence on foundation and church money and not having, in effect, anything new but simply the continuing effort to build a viable organization of welfare recipients around the country, the resources weren't there. And so it - they had to close the national office and wanted to kind of keep going.

And there are remnants of the welfare rights groups of the - that period that have

survived. Mainly groups that were able to kind of institutionalize their support in the poverty programs or in legal services programs, and there was in the 80s and in the 90s, now, as well, kind of a - now there's a somewhat of a revival of welfare rights organizing around the welfare reform stuff. But there's - there's a group that calls itself the National Welfare [Rights] Union, but it doesn't really have very much strength and it's not located - it doesn't have groups in very many states or anything of that kind. It's a kind of a coalition of some of these groups, but it's not strong. And so for all intents and purposes, I think after George left in '73, I think that that was kind of like the end of it.

George started Movement For Economic Justice and then was killed in a tragic boating accident, I think it was in the summer of '73, I had the good fortune to have seen him in the early part of the summer - or maybe later in the summer that he died - I saw him that summer at the National Welfare Rights Organization [NWRO] Convention and it was after George had left the NWRO to start the Movement For Economic Justice and I remember very distinctly that there were three main speakers at this welfare rights convention, and one of them was Ralph Abernathy who had just announced that he was resigning as the chair of SCLC and retiring. The other was Jesse Jackson whose star was on the rise. And the other was George Wiley. Abernathy gave a moving talk with his history and his stepping aside, and Jackson gave a fiery preacheresque, Jacksonesque talk, and then George Wiley spoke. And I remember standing in the back of the room, as I had in many other conventions and many other situations, listening to George, who used to tease George because he would try to kind of emulate the cadences of civil rights preacher -

HS: Tim, you have a lot - quite a lot on that in the last session -

TS: Okay, I told that. All right. That's fine.

HS: Very good.

TS: So in any case, that was my realization that George had - was teaching - trying to teach still the women to - of the need to organize a broader movement. That's a good telling of the end of it.

HS: Sure. When you get out here - I had a question. Partly this comes from Lynn. You get to SF State. It's a very different community. I mean you're used to being an activist. You will remain very committed to social causes. Now you're out in an environment at SF State with many Ph.D.'s who were fairly apolitical on the campus. There are many exceptions, but, you know, it's kind of a - you're an activist, they're academics. They're supposed to be detached. You know, we all aren't, but you know, you're a very committed individual. You're stepping also to a school where Hayakawa had just broken a big strike and morale was not all that

terrific. How did all of that kind of set with you and what was your response to all that?

TS: Well, here's what happened to me at San Francisco State. The first - our department had been in - the faculty in our department had had a central role in the strike. Stan Ostovitz was the picket captain in the strike and he had been fired for his efforts. And he was a friend of - a good friend of mine, and of Pat Purcell, who was a - who essentially lost his position as director for his support of the strike but was continuing to teach. A number of the students that were in the first class that reopened the school - the social work program was closed because of the turmoil between the faculty and the - and the student and the faculty strike in the '68/'69 period. And this is the fall of '70 when we were - when the school was reorganized and reopened, the social work program, by Virginia Turner, who brought me in. And I had the unusual experience of being brought in as part of a center group between the progressives who supported the strike and the students, and the conservative social work faculty who were opposed. And we were brought in by Virginia Turner to be her people and to form a center to help reunite the department. I'd always been on the left of most efforts, an activist side of most efforts, but here I was in that sense by role and by organizing of Virginia Turner in my department, you know, a more centrist kind of role.

Secondly, the students who were in the first class were veterans of the strike. Many of them students of color. And the faculty and the students had a strong - were strongly affected by the active student participation in shaping programs like Ethnic Studies, et cetera, which came out of the strike and wanted a strong voice in shaping the policies and approach of the Social Work program as it reopened. And we made a commitment to the admission of a majority of students of color and set about to implement that. And the students who had been through the strike were community savvy students and, you know, were in that sense kind of up my alley. So in my immediate community there were those people. And then gradually as time went on, I began to understand the events of the strike that had taken place before I was here. And naturally to make common cause with a number of the faculty leaders who had backed the students and had been involved in the faculty strike itself. But I wasn't very active outside of social work in the - in the early days.

I actually - the formative thing that drew me into the labor movement and started off my career as a person who could unite labor and community organizing was - came about through my students. And my students had been involved at the San Francisco Department of Social Services in an effort to re-form a union of social workers there in a complicated organizing situation. And when they realized that I knew about organizing and that I knew about welfare through my welfare rights experience, they asked for my help in organizing in the welfare department. And the situation was that there was the predecessor union of 790, Local 400. And Local 400 had in it both clerical workers and

miscellaneous employees and social workers in the welfare department. In other welfare departments in the state, the eligibility workers and social workers were organized by a sister SEIU Local, Local 535.

There was a kind of anarchist organization, the Social Services Employee Union, that was an activist anarchist group and they were kind of counter posed with some doctrinaire leftists who believed in what they called industrial unionism. Both of those groups were very opposed to a deal that got cut when 400 got tired of having both of these groups kind of bothering them because they didn't have very much in the social - in the Department of Social Services, and they just didn't like their meetings torn up by all this ideological conflict. So they were kind of glad to cut a deal with their sister local, 535, to give the jurisdiction in the Welfare Department over to them, which was the ordinary arrangement. That was vigorously disputed on being anti-Democratic, a union deal. And on being a craft union, which was absurd but I mean that was the notion. We want to be in the union of all the public employees. We don't want to be in a craft union. It's an industrial union, a craft union conflict.

But the deal was made and many of the social work - many of the activists among the social workers, and particularly some of the younger ones, didn't want to have anything to do with the anarchist group who they found a pain in the neck and boring and their leaflets were on and on and on. They did some good individual action on grievances and the like, but they didn't - they didn't treat people very well and they didn't like their style. And on the other hand, they really didn't like the doctrinaire political people who wanted to stay with 400 for ideological reasons so they saw the idea of being with other social workers in 535 as getting a fresh start at having a union. They wanted help organizing that because there really wasn't very much there.

So they asked for my help and I started, you know, meeting with them. And then I met with the leadership of - the staff leadership of 535, David Araner and David Kramer and folks like that. And I had known them casually and the directors of the union, Devon [Obrodsky] and David Kripin and Bob Anderson, I had known them when I was doing welfare rights organizing in California because welfare recipients had walked the first picket line of the first public employee strike, which was a 535 strike in Los Angeles, and the second one, which was a 535 strike in Sacramento. And I had been instrumental in helping build support for those and it was seen as kind of a community connecting link person and I knew these guys, and we also shared some community organizing experience. Kramer and Araner came out of Detroit and had some experience with the Alinsky consultant organization and so forth and so on.

So I got with them. And they said, well, they didn't - their situation was such that they couldn't really put very much into this effort in San Francisco, but they wanted it to work so they asked me if I would be willing to be hired on contract to organize 535. So with

some opposition from the staff union of 535 which didn't like the idea of my getting a contract, I got a contract to organize the San Francisco Department of Social Services for 535. And I, in turn, got the leg work - much of the leg work done on that by hiring some students. And I also set up a conveyor belt benefit. If you got active in 535 in San Francisco, I could get you into the School of Social Work, and then I could get you a field work placement organizing with the union. So a number of people went through that, including Jerry Fillingim, who is now the political director of 535. Kind of came through that route. So I started organizing in the Department of Social Services.

That, in a very interesting way, led me into direct relationships with SEIU. And the way that that happened was that SEIU had social workers in 535, the hospital workers in 250 at the San Francisco General, the janitors in - I can't remember their number - a separate janitors local. Bob Morgan's local. And the - and the large miscellaneous and clerical employees in Local 400. So bargaining and organizing with the city was done in coalition of which 535 was just a very small part 'cause we had the fewest members of any of those. The janitors even had more members than us. And - 66A, I think, was their number. In any case - so I got to be a part of meetings which had the leaders of SEIU, Tim Toomey, who was the head of 250 and the International Vice-President, and whoever was the head of 400 at the time. I worked with Jerry Hepps and then with Vince Courtney and so forth. And with Bob Morgan. So I was immediately thrust into relations with this important union in this city. And I went to the joint council and I became a SEIU person. And my contract lasted for maybe a year-and-a-half or something and we got the chapter organized and then they assigned it to another field rep and I kind of kept, you know, helping and - with students and so forth.

Meanwhile, what had happened was the next major organizing effort that I was involved in had appeared and there was, again, a connection to - that I was able to make to the labor movement. So now I'm an SEIU person and connected to the labor movement. Mike Miller - I think the year was '74 - calls together a group of 60s veterans and the nature of the gathering to assess the learning of organizing in the 60s and locate ourselves in the 70s and figure out what to do. What was beginning to happen in other places, most notably in Chicago, was something really very similar to what George Wiley had tried to do, which was to try to figure out a majority organizing strategy, an economic justice - on economic justice issues to unite poor people and working people and middle-income people around economic issues.

And so Mike had the interest in that and had ties with Heather and Paul Boothe, who were leaders of the effort in Chicago, and that actually came out of a dialogue between Saul Alinsky and Mike Royko in which Royko was really angry over the air pollution that was coming from Con Edison's use of bad coal to produce power in the Chicago area, and he asked Alinsky if he'd do anything about it. And Alinsky said, you write a column about it and if I get any response from the citizenry, I'll get the students in my

Industrial Areas Foundation program to organize 'em. So Royko wrote a column. They got a bushel of letters. Alinsky is reputed to have taken the letters, dumped them on the table in front of his organizing group and said, go for it and organize. And they had organized a group that was called "Citizens Against Pollution," and Paul Boothe was one of the leaders of it. And there was a minister and it had kind of a suburban ring. People concerned about pollution together with some inner city, lower income pieces and whatever, and was a - a kind of a prototype of a new organizing thing.

And we had heard about this and Paul and Heather - Heather was starting the mid-West academy to train people in community organizing after coming through the **Civil Rights and Women's Movement**. And Paul was moving in the - toward the labor movement and doing research and took the leadership of this CAP group. And Miller, reading these things correctly and with his ties from people from civil rights and anti-poverty work and welfare rights and so forth, called a bunch of us together. And I remember not being too sure what was going to happen and whatever, but I asked his wife of the time, Louise Escaro, a marvelous woman who had come out of the Mission Coalition, what is Mike going to do with all of this? And she said she didn't know, you know. We kind of - you know.

So we had the meeting and at the meeting, the hot issue of the time was the gasoline line. And so we started to try to figure out how we could organize around attacking big oil for its manipulation of the crisis provoked by OPEC. We couldn't figure out any [handles] immediately on the big oil gasoline issue, and one of the people who came was an Episcopalian minister who had been involved with Alinsky and been involved in organizing in Oakland, Barry Bloom. And he brought his utility bill, his PG & E bill, and said, PG & E is asking for the biggest rate hike in their history. And as we thought about it, that was something that we could take on. People hated this increase in their PG & E bills and it was directly related to the cost of oil being jacked up through this manipulation with OPEC and the oil companies.

So we did a little - very little research and then decided at this gathering that we would call a meeting to do something - to create the kind of next generation middle-class, working-class poor people organizing, and we'd do it around this issue of utility rates. And so we had the meeting and we got this clever name, which didn't survive but - you shouldn't get clever names for organizations in meetings, but we got the name of Electricity and Gas for People. And the reason why we got it was somebody said we want to turn PG & E around, so some wag just turned the initials around and then we fit words to that. And we called E & GP. But many people called it EG & P. And nobody could learn it. And by the time people finally learned it and figured it out, we had moved on to try to change it. Also a mistake, but that's another story.

So we started in the form of a - we start - we decided that we would go directly after this

rate hike and that we would do so by building the coalition of the forces that we were connected with. So there were women who were organizing in East Oakland, a Women's Action Center, Ruth Mackelvany and the fabled Tish Sommers, who was later to start the Older Women's League and was active in organizing all of the women, invented the whole effort about displaced homemakers and so forth. So they were involved. Delancy Street was involved. There were several senior groups that were involved. There were a variety of groups. And I brought SEIU. I went to the Joint Council and said we're going to get involved in this thing. It's a good issue for us. And they said fine, we'll back it. You be our representative. So that gave me a portfolio, a base, to come into this coalition.

And so we started Electricity & Gas for People, and we started with a winning fight to open up the Public Utility Commission hearings by the expedient means of going in them. And they caved in and let the public in for the first time into these hearings and we started a whole campaign to attack this rate hike. And then we began to try to figure out an organizing strategy that would build us a continuing organization, a multi-issue organization, and a base of our own instead of simply relying on others - the coalition - others in the coalition to produce the numbers that we needed - we needed if we were going to continue to have our own chapters or our own base. And we started to try to figure that out.

So having gotten involved in that - in that process - and to tell the truth, SEIU and other labor contacts we had were willing to support it, but they weren't - they didn't turn out people, you know, they didn't put out money. There wasn't any - you know, it was more nominal. But it was a good connection. It was a good, you know, kind of endorsement kind of thing. So we started organizing and really never turned back. We figured out that an alternative way of doing utility rates into a lifeline utility formulation would be the best issue for us and we figured out how to cut it and how to do it and how to win it.

And we took it into the legislature - we used it to organize seniors as kind of the base of our efforts, and we took it into the legislature. We moved a lot of people, about seven or eight hundred to a lobby day, you know, four or five hundred to hearings and the like, and we had a lively and winning campaign and we're the first state in the country to turn around the traditional way that utility rates had been up to that time, the more energy you use, the cheaper the rate. And we got it to be after an initial cheap amount of energy, then the more you use, the higher the rate, which gave the proper environmental signal and the proper signal in the environment we were talking about.

And we got in - it tapped into the hostility against big oil and it - and it - we got in at exactly the right moment where something like this had to happen anyway and we provided leadership for it. We used it to create a lively organization and moved to open offices in Los Angeles and ultimately in San Diego.

And our next major issue was tax reform, which we would have won - property tax reform, which we would have won and gotten an ability-to-pay circuit breaker, and that would have changed the history of California because there would have been no Prop 13. And what happened was that Jerry Brown, you know, in one of those classic efforts, was really not willing to back a tax - a circuit-breaker tax on the - on the property tax. So when that went narrowly down in the legislature, we went after Brown tooth and nail, but he - Gray Davis actually played a role in outfoxing us with the press, and Jerry Brown was able to nominally support it but not to give it what it needed to be able to actually get it through the legislature. And as soon as that failed, Prop 13 rolled. And we had lost that fight.

We moved even more people on our tax justice fight than we had moved in the utility campaign. We moved more than fifteen hundred people to a lobby day. And all of the - and we had Jack Henning and many coalition partners. And Henning never forgot that - he kind of realized who I was when I was chairing this thing in Sacramento with all these people and introducing him, and it colored, in a good way, my relation - not as well as the fact that my father was a good lobbyist - a good-guy lobbyist up there. And he had kind of a friendship with Jack Henning. But those two things made Henning and I friends for - you know, really forever.

And so that effort - that continuing effort in which you'll note the interesting thing about was I not a staff person. I was earning my living teaching and Paul Boothe had shown all of us veterans of the 60s that we didn't have to be staff people organizing power and organizations for other people. We could be the leaders. So Mike Miller and I became the leaders of this effort. Mike was the first chair of the E & GP, and then he became - when we created the continuing multi-issue organization, which was called the Citizens Action League, Mike became the first chair of the Citizens Action League, and I became the campaign chair and the secretary of the Citizens Action League. And then I was the second president of it. Mike reverted to his form by leaving the leadership and becoming for a period of time the staff director of the organization. But I never returned to a staff role and I continued in a - in a leadership role in that organization and worked in it for its more than ten years life.

That organization eventually affiliated with ACORN in the late 70s and died a peaceful death in the early 80s. But it was a very significant effort. And among other things besides its work on issues, it also pioneered funding by starting door-to-door canvassing for this kind of effort in the Bay Area. Something that we also picked up from Chicago and started early and there was a reliable source of money to go with foundation monies and money directly raised by members, and it was a very good conveyor belt for recruiting young people and eventually hiring some of them as organizers instead of just canvassers. And -

[End of Tape 6 - Side 11 (A)]
[Begin Tape 6 - Side 12 (B)]

HS: Okay.

TS: And amongst the people who came through the Citizens Action League effort who are notable people, past and present, in the Bay Area community, Josie Mooney started and - as an organizer at the Citizens Action League. She was on the core fellows program and was assigned to us and we hired her. And then the organizer of the campaign when I started working as chair of it was - and went on to other campaigns was Bud Dougherty, who later went to work for 790 and now is the - has been for a number of years the general manager of the largest union in California, C Schools, California School Employee Association. Denise Bergiere, who was a major staff person for Neighbor to Neighbor, came out [unintelligible] Citizen Action League. What's his name, Jim - the head of Local 2850, whose name is eluding me at the moment, was a Citizens Action League. Jim DuPont was a Citizen Action League organizer.

A number of the people who went through and stayed in this work, many of whom found their way into the labor movement, you know, went through this effort. Larry Gordon, who's the - worked through - was the organizer for the Industrial Areas Foundation in San Francisco, worked with Citizens Action League as a staff director for a summer while he was in law school. So this was a - this was a major organizing effort and a lot of people went through - Pat Jackson was a major organizer and her husband, Dan Jackson, was a - the chair of Citizens Action League, San Francisco formation. And there just were numerous people, leaders and staff members, who went through the organization and learned their organizing there and, you know, continued in one way or another, you know, in the work. So this was a major - you know, a major effort.

HS: You mentioned - just one technical point. You mentioned a circuit-breaker tax. I didn't quite follow how that would work.

TS: It would have made a portion of the property tax based on the ability to pay basically. I mean, that's the short version of it. Instead of everybody paying the same property tax, it would make a portion of that tax ability to pay. So the Prop 13 taxpayers' revolt led by Jarvis had arisen because of the rapid increase in tax - in property taxes. Occasion votes by the increase in value of property and also by the continued reliance on the - the sole reliance on the property tax to fund county government, which was given an unfair share of the services to fund as California grew. So there was no reform between the county and the state government, a struggle which has continued to this day, and there was an increase in property value and there was an increase in property so people's property taxes went up. And if you were on a fixed income, you were really in trouble.

We actually got into this fight because we did - we did door-to-door canvassing and we went behind - we found that we could go behind the Jarvis people who were trying to get signatures and we could get people to sign our petition - it wasn't to get something on the ballot at that time, but a petition for tax justice, behind the very people that had assigned the Prop 13 formulation. And that showed us that people didn't care whether it was a good solution or a bad solution. They just wanted a solution, you know. And so we set about to try to reform the property tax and we came very close to getting it through the legislature.

HS: How come Brown wouldn't -

TS: Well, he backed it, but - he nominally backed it, but he wouldn't stick his neck out and - you know, and push for it at the critical -

HS: How come? I mean, there seems to be -

TS: It needed a two-thirds vote and I think the other politicians underestimated the anger of the public about this issue, and they got kind of caught up in some of the details, which were less important. And the quintessential meeting where we got out flanked by Gray Davis actually was we set up - as we were trying to get the bill through the legislature, we set up a visual outside of the governor's office in Los Angeles. And we - we used an old Vietnam war device of reading off the names. And instead of reading off the names of those who had died, we read off all the names of the people who signed our canvassing petitions in favor of tax justice. And after we had the vigil for a week or so and got publicity and whatever, we encountered Brown as he came to the office. And he agreed to meet with us. And we went to the meeting seeking to have him make a public statement backing the tax justice bill that was going to be voted on in the legislature.

As we started into the meeting, we were accompanied by the press and Gray Davis blocked the press and said that the governor would not meet if the press were in the meeting. We should have said then the governor's not meeting with us because this is a public issue and we should have defied him and gone in and - in which case Brown would have been forced to support this bill. But Gray Davis - our people - you always have this balance. Our people who were leading this were not sophisticated. They had worked so hard to get the meeting with the governor. They weren't willing to risk not having the meeting. So they went in. The press waited outside and Gray Davis said that we'll give a statement to the press. We'll both give a statement to the press when we come out. In the meeting Brown was charming and said of course he backed our bill and whatever, you know. And people thought that they had won.

We went out Davis commandeered the press. Brown gave a statement which was this is

a good bill, but I'm not sure that it's going to get through the legislature and, you know, whatever. It was a damning by faint praise. And we were forced to - the press wasn't very interested in talking to us. We got a little, but you know - but instead of getting a joint press conference in which he was backing our bill, you know, and put on record publicly about that, it was a very much more nominal event. And Gray Davis had preserved the governor's political freedom of action at the expense of our being able to get, you know, what we needed.

HS: Yes. Amazing. Boy that's a good story.

TS: Probably the next thing that I want to talk about is that the vigorous effort against PG & E made us in the Bay Area really kind of like Electricity and Gas for People began to be a household word, and when we abandoned it and became the Citizens Action League, we eventually got people to see the connection. But people would stop me on the street and say how you doing, hit 'em again, you know. My PG & E bill is terrible. And, you know, people were really wonderful. And we were canvassing door-to-door and reaching lots of people that way. We were on television because we were doing a lot of things. I was kind of famous because I was leading the band on these fights and so forth.

In the midst of this, we got into - after our victory on lifeline utility rates and the organization had been going for a while, in 1978 approximately, there was an effort that Mike Miller put together to start a coalition of church and unions in San Francisco called the San Francisco Organizing Project. And the two organizers of that were Larry Gordon, who now works for the Industrial Areas Foundation and Josie Mooney, who is now the president of the Labor Council and the executive director of Local 790. And Josie and Larry learned from the Industrial Areas Foundation, which had kind of pioneered this kind of church-based - institutionally church-based organizing and had reinvigorated it really with a methodology that had been developed by Ernesto Cortez of the Industrial Areas Foundation in Texas and in East Los Angeles, based on one-to-one contacts with leaders and linking their values and what they really believed in to action. And these notions of working with established institutions to revitalize them based on people identifying and acting on their values was a powerful organizing process. Josie and Larry started putting this together and the Citizens Action League was invited to participate because they wanted it to be broader than the churches. And they got some unions through Mike's connections and through some of mine. And one of the early fights that came about was a pollution fight involving PG & E. So naturally we were interested in - the foes of PG & E and had an environmental connection with changing the rate structure. And this involved the explosion downtown of a transformer station in which it was revealed that these contained this deadly chemical PCB.

And so that issue was brought to this San Francisco Organizing Project by the Janitor's Union which had been directly affected at the building where this happened, and they

wanted to do something about it. And they were using this issue as a community issue in part to get ready for ethics struggles that they were to have with the building owners. So I started working with Local 87 to help them on that and formed a working relationship that survives to this day with the downtown janitor's union -

HS: You knew Hall at that time, yeah -

TS: Pardon -

HS: Jack Hall's son. You knew Jack Hall's son, I'm sure, at that time?

TS: Yeah. Derek Hall was an officer at that time. And Ray Jacobs - the union was troubled and Ray Jacobs had been the trustee and that had been elected and there was a switch in the leadership once and then Ray was back again. And I started working with Ray and his staff and - and Local 87 was part of the San Francisco organizing project. And I asked Larry Gordon, who had been an old friend of mine from welfare rights days, had done welfare rights in Rhode Island, did he want this issue brought into this coalition? He said, "Yes, I want this issue." I said, "Fine, we'll bring it in." So both with the Citizens Action League coming in and the Local 87 on the PG & E fight coming in, I was part of the initial founding convention of the San Francisco Organizing Project, and that lead through my friend - continued friendship with Larry and with Josie. That led in later years to my getting involved with the Industrial Areas Foundation efforts to organize in - in San Francisco, which are - you know, are underway. So that coalition of churches and unions, you know, was in the - started in the late 70s, so, you know, I was involved in that.

Now at about that same time the other kind of major wonder of my life, love of my life and whole of my life, began to happen and it had a welfare rights root to it. And after I tell this one, then I want to start on the union stuff.

HS: All right. Okay. Yeah, I had a couple of questions on the 70s as well, but that's okay. Go forward. You're doing great.

TS: So my good friend, Gary Delgado, would come out of welfare rights organizing and helped Wade Rafky, who had come out of welfare rights organizing, start the organization called ACORN, originally in Arkansas. And Gary had moved out here and among other things [had intended] the original Mike Miller gathering when he was kind of doing reconnaissance, and Gary was married to a woman, Marsha Henry, who had been a welfare rights organizer, a friend of mine also, and had worked on my staff at Welfare Rights. And Gary had worked at - on Albert James staff at - in New York City.

And Gary decided to start a training center. There were a number of training centers,

[the] most known of them, Heather Boothe's Midwest Academy and the Industrial Areas Foundation began to do training of organizers. Training of organizers began to be a popular activity in the 70s and Gary realize that there was no training - it continued to be a problem of recruiting people of color into organizing and providing training for them. So he set up with Albert James of Welfare Rights. They - on the East Coast and Gary on the West Coast. They set up the Center for Third World Organizing, which I named - just a sideline on kind of a naming, sloganing type person, and I do that kind of thing at the beginning of the Movement for Economic Justice in an effort to do something about that name which was unsuccessful. I wrote probably the - the single slogan that will outlast me, "Robin Hood Was Right," and it became a popular - a very popular bumper sticker and T-shirt and button and it still survives. And that was my effort to talk about economic justice as it should be done.

In any case, I helped Gary name the Center for Third World Organizing and helped him to start it, just as a friend, neighbor, and my daughter was his first - his and Marsha's first babysitter when they had kids. And so as Gary began to develop the Center for Third World Organizing, initially the board of the center was all people of color and I was kind of an unofficial advisor and so forth. He then had a - had a separate corporation called the "Applied Research Center," which really wasn't real at that time, but we used to channel a government grant through, and he put me on the board of that, and in a creative organizing move put some other white people and some other people of color on that board and kind of used it as a farm club for the see-too board and then the two boards would meet together. And then after a while he gave up and - or as his wife said, he became liberal in his old age and he just had me directly move to the see-too board, on which I still am the only white person on that board.

And so I got actively involved in the Center for Third World Organizing, and in its early days I was kind of critical. Gary did training and some research stuff and meetings and so forth, and I pressed him to do organizing. He had an organizing project in Richmond that didn't work out, and I kept pushing. And then he invented the Minority Activist Apprenticeship Training Program, MAAP, which was a way of doing a summer program for young people of color. And, you know, MAAP is now on its twelfth or thirteenth year or something, and became a major conveyor belt for identifying and training young people of color as organizers. And for ten years I worked summers for MAAP actually doing training and doing organizing in the field which is how you train organizers in a number of places, including here in Oakland and including with unions. I was involved in several Justice for Janitors unions and also with the hotel and restaurant and so forth with young people of color in the summer. So that - the starting of that process came in the late 70s. C2 just became eighteen years old.

In any case, that was a very rich - became a very rich and integral part of my life and took me into contact - continued my contact with organizers around the country and all that

kind of thing.

One other footnote, before I do want to shift gears and start talking about the union, how I got into the - my role in the faculty union, in the - in the democratic interlude of the 70s, the Carter Administration, a number of us put together a training program for lawyers and paralegals and how to work with community organizations. We started out by traveling around the country and having meetings in all of the sections of the country - all of the regions of the National Legal Services Corporation, which was the sponsor of this effort, with lawyers and paralegals and organizers of community groups. And trying to figure out what some of the connections were, what some of the obstacles were and whatever, and we invented a training program that revolved around the three problems that we identified.

The first problem was lawyers and paralegals who thought there weren't any community groups in their area to relate to. The second problem was somebody wouldn't let them do that work. The rules, their boss, somebody. They won't let me do it. And the third was we are working with community groups but it's very hard. So we developed training that we - that we delivered all over the country again in - and four lawyers and paralegals and engaged some organizers of community groups, and it dealt with how could the legal services of programs provide groups representation and make their relationships with community groups and help people form community groups and strengthen and represent community groups and not just do case-by-case work. And we got a lot of resources moved in that area and identified people, and again I had the opportunity to keep in touch with the people that I knew from welfare rights and so forth, and that was a very rich experience.

And there were two outside organizers for that, myself and a guy named Barry Grier, and then there were two guys inside the legal service corporation and two legal services bosses who were involved in it. And it was a very, very interesting effort. It had a non-distinct name on purpose to kind of conceal what we were doing. It was called "M-FAT." Multi-Forum Advocacy Training. And we went around and did this two cycles in all the eight regions of the country, you know, that the legal services worked. And then we did a training of trainers and start - and then Ronald Reagan was elected and we squirreled away enough money to continue for a little while and put out money and, you know, what have you, and then eventually the Republicans clamped off that activity after the - after the aberration of the Carter years. So that was a major activity in which I engaged.

Meanwhile, I was not active in the faculty union. The faculty union -

HS: Can I just ask you -- before we go into that, just a little -

TS: Okay.

HS: You did a book in the 70s also?

TS: Yes.

HS: One of the questions I had was how - okay, you - how do you have time to do the book and also what's going on with you on the campus? How is all this -

TS: I brought the book with me as a project between the National Welfare Rights Organization and the United Church of Christ. We had formed up a - an effective relationship between a unit of the National Board for Homeline Ministry as a unit - of the major unit of the United Church of Christ, had an economic justice welfare section to it. And they wanted to go beyond the usual, we'll give you some money and form a kind of a - to educate their members about the welfare issue, their church members, and provide support and have commerce with welfare rights, and I was the point person for that. And one of the things that wasn't easy was the - there was no simple book about the welfare system. There was a scholarly book "Regulating The Poor," by Francis Piven and Richard Clower, but there wasn't - regular people weren't going to read that. And there was no basic explanation of the welfare system.

So I set about to write one and the United Church Pilgrim Press published it and I brought it with me. I was doing it in '70 when I left, and I brought it with me as a project. And I completed it the first summer that I - that I was here, the summer of '71. It was published, I think, in '72, and it did very well. It was selected by the National High School Debate Organization as the book for the - they had a guaranteed income proposition as their high school debating issue, and I had a little thing in my - back of my book that people should write and tell me if the book was useful, and I got letters from high school debaters that used it all over the country that said your book was good, really liked it, it was lively, it wasn't boring, learned something from it, are you going to write a book on next year's topic.

HS: [Laughing]

TS: It was just - you know, just fascinating. So that was the story of my book.

Meanwhile at school, I basically was teaching community organizing, inventing a class on the welfare system. There was no - in the academy at that time, there were classes, not only at San Francisco State but throughout the United States there were all kinds of classes on housing issues, on other urban issues, on most any topic you could mention. There was not one single class on the American welfare system. A gigantic significant system, no class. A little of it is taught in social work schools, but not in the way of kind

of like this is the American welfare system. These are the programs, this is how it got to be that way, this is what it's about, which was the outline of my book. So I invented a class on welfare and I taught it for a number of years, and I was asked to teach it by some students at Santa Cruz, so I went down to Santa Cruz and taught it.

So I was continuing my work in the - my contacts with welfare and my interest in the welfare system. I was - became a kind of a - an academic that was called - if Ronald Reagan was going to reform welfare, they were going to do a T.V. interview on it, I would be an expert that they would call me. You know, so I did some, you know, stuff. And I had become an expert in the welfare system really because I had worked with the women in welfare rights and it had - been educated in the system by them, and I had also done some further study in my social work training and in my own efforts. So I became an expert on welfare rights, I became an expert on utility rates because of the struggle we had with PG & E. Where did the utility rate system come about.

I used to tell funny stories like what really - there were two inventions that were responsible for the generation of central - centrally generated electricity in this country. The first was the street car. And the reason why the street car was important was that electricity used for lights was exclusively at night. You needed a daytime use. If you didn't have a daytime use, you couldn't keep your plant going and you had an unused plant during the day. Inefficient. When you got electric streetcars you now rationalize twenty-four hour use of centrally generated electricity. But the thing that really made it work was a Scotsman invented the electric meter so they could figure out how to charge for the stuff.

And since - to this day there is a lot that's not known about electricity. Electricity is one of those mysteries. It's not totally a mystery. We know a lot about it. We have engineers and electrical - physicists and whatever, but it still is a somewhat mysterious force. Well, it was so mysterious in those days that you couldn't even figure out how to charge for it, so until a Scotchman came up with the thing. So those were the two things that - then electricity, you know, took over America and then we had the [unintelligible] and the scandals around the control of electricity in America and all that stuff. Very interesting. And then you had the rate structure that we got to sell more and more of the stuff, a marketing rate structure and all that. And I did my homework on that and used it for popular education purposes as we - as we fought PG & E.

So these things came into my teaching. I taught the stuff that I was doing. I taught the stuff I had done. I taught welfare policy. I began to think in terms of broader social action, social change. But I didn't write very much. I wrote the welfare book. I didn't write very much as I told my - various promotion committees. My - I'm not a scholar teacher, I'm a practitioner teacher. There's a perfectly respectable mode in the practice professions that - continuing to practice that has been really - really gone into disrepute in

social work because with the rise of the doctor in social work, master's degree social work practitioners who used to come in and be the teachers of social work increasingly someone would get a master's degree, teach - practice for a couple of years, then they'd go get a Pd.D. and teach.

And I remember when someone was hired with me as a practitioner of – [unintelligible] social work, case work, I used to tell students for ten years to go take this woman's class because she was a terrific practitioner. After a while I finally started listening myself and looking at her and I realized she hadn't done any social work in ten years. She still was a good teacher, she still knew the stuff well, but I'd better stop advertising her as a practitioner. On the other hand, I was practicing. I was doing my community social work, and it enriched my teaching. But I was not active on the campus. I was not active in the union. I was a member; I joined the union immediately, the AFT Local 1352 upon my coming to campus. I was delighted that there was a union. And I've paid attention to watching, you know, but I didn't - I didn't go to meetings, I wasn't an active member of the union, I wasn't involved. I was active in SEIU in the route that I told you.

Then what happened was, kind of after the legal services work of the 70s and after the - after the organizing work that I've referred to and whatever, suddenly - or relatively suddenly for me it began to be clear that there was a union work in my own - on my own campus that was relevant for me. So to that chapter I should next turn.

HS: Okay. We're pretty close to the end of this side. Maybe we should go on to another side.

TS: Yeah, why don't we do another side.

HS: Yes. Okay, we're going to call this the end of the side then. This is the end of side 12.

**[End of Tape 6 - Side 12 (B)]
[Begin Tape 7 - Side 13 (A)]**

HS: This will be the beginning of side 13.

I was wondering, during this period of time, did anybody on these committees ever say, well, you know, you're really not supposed to be out there in the public eye. You're supposed to be writing articles nobody reads. I mean, did you ever -

TS: Well, I didn't really get that kind of pressure. When I - the short history of my peer

review process is that when I as up for tenure after about five years, it was sufficient that I had written a book, the welfare book. I had some short pieces published in organizing things and it developed some original organizing material, although not in the form of scholarly or peer review journals. I made the joke that I put, "Robin Hood Was Right," the bumper sticker into my tenure committee. And people said how was it received, I said I got tenure. I said it's a scholarly publication, you know, and how many people have got a nationally published book bumper sticker.

And the social work and my - in general in my department in particular, regarded work that I did as reasonably within the realm of community social work, so I wasn't - it wasn't as if I was involved in some kind of sectarian politics of some kind, you know. And I also was not involved in any conflict on the campus. So, you know, my notoriety in the Electricity & Gas For People, the anti-PG & E effort was generally probably a plus.

Another professor testified against my getting tenure and I was furious when I found out, but you know, I got tenure so I didn't need to worry about it. A curve ball that was brought up at the last minute could have created a problem. What they said was that the San Francisco State College was beginning to - which it was when I got there - was beginning to convert itself to be San Francisco State University and in that process they were beginning to want to require the Ph.D. When I was hired they did not have that on the books and as I worked my way toward tenure, they basically adopted that standard. I said that I had been hired under the previous standard and could not be held to that, that I had every reason to believe I could get tenure without having a - a doctorate in the field in which I was working. And they said, well, you have to have a doctorate or a doctoral equivalency.

So the department adopted rules of doctoral equivalency and I said if it's just a matter of submitting my materials to be declared doctorally-equivalent, that's fine. If you're telling me I have to do something, it's not fine. So they said no, no, no, and they evaluated my work and they put a recommendation forward that I be identified as doctorally-equivalent. The dean did not accept the recommendation and he said that - that I would have to go through a prospective doctorally-equivalent process. But where the thing came out, I was advantaged in that myself and an African-American woman were the two people who were up for tenure. And they knew they could not deny her tenure because they would have a big fight over diversity on their hands. And if they denied me tenure and gave her tenure, that wouldn't wash. So they decided - and she wasn't doctorally-equivalent, but she was willing to enter a doctoral equivalency program.

So the dean called me in and said - the dean of the School in Behavioral Social Sciences, DeVere Pentony, called me in and said his concern granting me tenure was that I could not be promoted unless I got the doctorate or doctoral equivalency. And he did not - would not want to have anybody on the faculty who would be forever in an assistant

professor, and would I agree with him that I would do what was necessary to get promoted or whatever. So making mental reservations that I didn't give a shit about getting promoted and I had a brother-in-law who was an electrical engineer, who had been in a similar circumstance and had been for many years an assistant professor. I just wanted to have a job. I didn't care what my rank was. So I said, well, certainly I'll - I'll certainly work at this whatever I'm to do.

So I got tenure. And shortly thereafter someone won a case in which they said that you - they couldn't change the standard. And so that if you were hired with one degree, and that was the standard at that time, you could in fact be promoted. I didn't have to go through any hoops. And then I misunderstood the rules and so I waited, you know, about five years 'cause I thought it had to be five years after tenure. Which I didn't. I could have tried to get promoted then. And I went to be promoted to associate professor. And then I had a great happening which was that the dean - they sent up my recommendation from the department and the dean raised questions about it, but he didn't tell me or the department and the way the thing kind of came down, I then was denied - unfairly denied promotion.

So I filed a grievance. And the grievance was under the old grievance procedure that had been established by executive order before the establishment of the union - the recognition of the union. And so I was - I had what I thought was a strong case of a procedural error and that it was improper and that I should - my recommendation should have been - then the dean claimed that he sent his letter raising questions back to the department in an effort to strengthen my recommendation. But when it was not responded to, he couldn't deal with it and I - you know, it's all - the dean wound up kind of being on my side. So I handled my own case. Not usually a good idea, but I handled my own case and I got some advice from some people. Axen and others helped me. And handled my own case. And I got an absolutely wonderful decision from the grievance committee, which then the rules then were if the grievance took one position and the president took another, then you could go to binding arbitration, and the arbitrator could - did not have a hearing. Simply looked at the record and picked one. Couldn't split the difference or anything, just could pick one.

Well, the committee - I think because of a mistake, but later they claimed they intended it all along - said that I - that it was prejudicial, the dean's letter and the process, and therefore I should be promoted and I should be given two steps of back pay. Well, that was an extra step of back pay. So it went to President Romberg, and President Romberg focused on that. And he said, well, I accept that he should be promoted, but two steps is unfair. I will give him no back pay, which was totally stupid because if the argument's acceptable, I'm entitled to back pay. I'm not entitled to two steps, but I should get one.

So I then got to negotiate from a position of strength with the then provost, Larry Yanny,

and I said, "Look Yanny, if I send this to arbitration, I'm going to win because no arbitrator is going to buy the president's decision. It flies in the face of the situation. I'm going to win two steps. In addition, you're going to have to pay the cost of the arbitration. And in addition - 'cause that's - the university would have to pay. In addition, it ain't going to be quiet. I'm going to be very noisy about how stupid the president was. Instead of giving me what was due, that he even agreed what was due, he had to press this - this case. And he's going to look dumb and spend money and it's going to be bad for you all. If this is what you want, I'll just take it to arbitration."

So he said, "Well, what do you want?" I said, "I want one step." But I said, "I want a letter like everybody else that says that I deserve to be promoted. And I want the money in three weeks." "Oh, my God," he says, "I don't know if I can do it." I said, "Well, fine. I'll go to arbitration. Suit yourself." So he called and he said, "Well, we can get you the money in three weeks. Not a problem," he said. "But in the letter," he says, "I can't get the president to agree to - the president says he doesn't know that you would have been promoted. So he can't write you a letter that you - like deserved it because he doesn't know you. The committee didn't recommend you, whatever." Well, meanwhile I'd been going through the process again. And I said, "Well, I'm recommended by this year's committee and everything, you know, so what do you mean he doesn't know that I deserve it. Of course I deserve it." So he says, "Well, how about this. I can get the president to send you not a different letter that you're asking for, but the same letter everybody else gets. It's just the boilerplate letter." I said, "Fine. That's all I want. I'm not asking for a separate letter."

So I have this classic letter which says, you know, congratulations, you know, upon the recommendations of the committees, you know, and your good work, you're hereby promoted to associate professor. The date of the letter is the following year that I was promoted, but in the letter it says, effective the previous year. So I got exactly what I wanted and I got my one back pay and I got - had a terrific time and the whole thing was really marvelous. And in addition, when I went for promotion, I had a meeting in the living room here and I read my application to be promoted and all the work I had done for ten years at the - you know, in the community at the university, all of my record, and my children and my wife clapped. And I said that's just before the process even started, you know, it's my submission. And I said, "That's it. I'm promoted." The people who I cared about, me and my family, think I'm promoted. So I'm prom - if those other people don't have good taste, I don't care about it.

So when I went through this kind of hardship, I didn't care about it. And when I went out - I got to do a grievance, which is great, and I met the three people on the grievance committee and they were faculty members I wouldn't have met otherwise, wouldn't have known, good people, and then I had - got to do combat with Larry Yanny and make Paul Romberg eat it in a small way. Hey, life is good. And when I got promoted to professor

five years later, I sent out a letter - and my committee sent out a letter to Wyatt and Fleur to have people provide not just he should be promoted letters, but substantive accounting for my work. And I sent out - I sent for about a hundred and fifty letters. I sent a hundred and fifty letters out. You hope - you know, you think you're going to get, you know, thirty, forty letters, so you have to send more.

I got about a hundred and thirty-five letters back. They came to the house and my wife called 'em Valentines. They were the most marvelous letters about me and my work. And just a whole range of people, I mean Tom Bates wrote me a wonderful letter. Jack Henning wrote me a wonderful letter. Jack Crowley wrote me the most grudging, wonderful letter that you would want to have, and he was a trustee at the time. He said something about I believe Brother Sampson has been an appropriate steward or - he had some locution about it and, and you know whatever it was - you know, it was really kind of a grudging letter, 'cause he really didn't like me because I was - for all this community stuff which he didn't have any taste for whatsoever and he didn't like the company I kept. But he wrote me a letter.

And all my organizer friends wrote me letters, but they didn't write these letters like, you know, Tim is a great guy and you should promote him. They wrote - they were constructed in the letter that I drafted for the committee that it had to be substantive. So they said substantive things about my work. They were marvelous. And then the committee that heads the - that was to write the professional letter, the head of the committee was Pat Purcell and he basically let me write the letter. So I wrote a wonderful letter in which I said I was - I was illustrative of all of the work of the - that the profession cared about, and that this was marvelous, and that I met all the standards of the department and quoted from the letters and put it all together and packaged it all up and got - and Dick Axen told me - he was on the University Promotion Committee at the time - it was the best file he'd ever seen. It was like a piece of cake. He said we looked at the file and we went onto the next. He said there wasn't any questions. You answered the questions. You marshaled the stuff. It was just marvelous. I haven't seen anything like it.

So I had a great time and got great secondary - people would call it, but I would call it the primary gains out of both of my promotions. So I didn't have the grungy process that so many of us have to go through in the academy. And, you know, like the rest of my life, a total blessing.

But let me tell you how I got involved in the union.

HS: Yeah, good.

TS: I became aware - I became a member of the United Professors of California and the local

on our campus, AFT Local 1352, which is the first local of the series of locals on all the campuses that made up the United Professors of California, when I came in 1970. And I got mail from the union and, you know, whatever, kind of observed and met some of the people and the like. But my first recollection of, you know, kind of getting a little bit more involved was Art Bierman, who is a very lively guy, taught him philosophy and was the president - statewide president of the UPC several times. There was - he and Warren Kessler at Fresno waged a running political battle and they had yearly elections, and the elections were conducted with all the members voting and expensive mail campaigns and they slates and - you know, back and forth and all of that. So I became aware of all of that.

And then I kind of met Art and Art had some interesting organizing ideas. And he organized a big event, and I can't even remember the details of it, but it was out in the quad and he, having heard I was a lively fellow and involved in community organizing, he got me involved in playing a role in this effort. And so that was kind of my first doing something for the union. So I started to attend a few meetings and, you know.

And then at the beginning of the 1980s as the process began to work its way through that ultimately led to the representation election in 1983, I became more active. And my first recollection of a president of the union that I really worked with - I think I worked on membership and organizing with Bernise Figgs. And she was kind of my mentor in coming in to the statewide effort of the UPC and told me who the players were and all that. And I went to some state council meetings, some state UPC meetings with here.

And then I worked in the - in the representation elections. There were two. The first representation election there was the UPC, the CFA, which was the Congress of Faculty Organizations in those days, and no agent. And the first election - the UPC and the Congress and Faculty Associations split the vote with something like forty-forty and no agent had twenty. Or maybe it was thirty-five/thirty-five and no agent had the rest. So there was not a winning - a majority winning, so you had to have a run-off. And the run-off dropped out the no agent position and the two unions - you had to choose one of the two unions. And I was involved in helping work to get UPC to win that election. And the UPC lost that election by less than fifty votes out of about thirteen thousand cast. And you could say anything about what caused it, you know. Anything causes a loss that narrow, anything that you would have changed. But I got some knowledge of AFT politics, which I didn't like. I didn't like how the national AFT handled that election.

HS: What did you dislike?

TS: Oh, I disliked in particular that they told people that we wouldn't seek agency shop, which was just stupid, of course. Any union's going to seek agency shop. And they tried to soft pedal our ties to the labor movement, which was the whole reason why we - most

of us were involved in the first place. And there were a number of things like that. And the process was terrible. They didn't consult with the UPC, they just issued - you know, they just kind of ran their own election mailings kind of stuff.

And then further, they believed that the UPC was going to lose the election and that cost us the election because they were unwilling to spend money on a losing effort. And they thought that we were going to lose the run-off because they thought all the no-agent votes would automatically go to the CFA. They were not correct in that, obviously.

And had any of that changed, I think we would of - the UPC would have won. However, I think that it's better that the UPC lost. I'll talk about that -

HS: Really?

TS: - I'll talk about that in a minute.

When the UPC lost that election, I was the UPC president on the campus having succeeded Bernise Figgs. When we lost the representation election for the faculty, we won the representation election for Unit 4, the academic support staff. So I actually was in a position of being a local president, responsible for representing the academic professionals who we had won. And I was involved in the UPC state council and with the academic professionals, counselors and the admissions people and EOP people and so forth, I was involved with them and they decided that they would like to join the CFA. But in order to join the CFA - 'cause they wanted to be with the faculty - in order to join the CFA, they had to get the AFT to give them permission.

So I told 'em it wasn't going to happen and that the AFT wouldn't give 'em permission. And they set up a meeting with Al Shanker in New York at his New York local. Sandra Feldman's local and his local. And they asked the UPC state council to support them and to send me with them as a token of that support.

HS: Do you know what year this is? Or close.

TS: It probably was in '83.

So I went with them and on the plane I explained to them that I would support what they said and Al Shanker would say to them, "no, we're going to support you and keep you as an AFT local." And, you know, that's what he's going to tell you, you know. So we went Shanker's union. We waited a few minutes for Shanker. They served us coffee and I remember chocolate croissants, very nice. And then Al Shanker, the great man himself, talked to us -

HS: International president, for anybody who might not know who that is.

TS: Right. Told us - gave his spin on why we lost the election, all of which I didn't believe, but I didn't want to fight with him because my job was to support these folks. They made their strong pitch to be allowed free, and he told 'em exactly what I told 'em - what I said there was. When we get out of there they said that I was very smart because I knew what he was going to say. You know, I said, well, that's the breaks. I said - I think I used with them, you know, you don't build a union by going - when you have representation rights, giving them away. And he said, you - when we win representation rights, we're going to stick with the people, you know. And we don't want you to leave. We want you to stay. And here's what we'll do, we'll have a statewide local, you know, for this unit and whatever.

So I then was approached by Ann Shadwick and Gordon Shadwick, her husband, who was an organizer on the campus, as to whether I would be willing to meet with them and meet with Bill Crist and talk about how the UPC people could come into the CFA. And I said that I would - of course I would. I had worked with Ann and the UPC, worked with Gordon. And I took it that there was going to have to be a coming together. So I became a leader in that effort to bring the UPC leadership and rank-and-file into the CFA. Now there was a lot of misinformation and a lot of truth as well, but everyone was - UPC was mainly activists and labor people and they looked down their nose at the professors who had successfully out-organized them, as it turned out, and gained the representation rights here. They didn't have very much respect for them, which was a mistake. And they didn't like how their organization was set up. They thought that it wasn't democratic because it had a delegate assembly elect officers instead of direct election of officers. There was all these things. And I basically understood that it was the only game in town.

And rapidly it became better than that in a way because what happened was the California State Employees Association with whom the Congress of Faculty Associations, that was one of their affiliates. They were affiliated with California State Employees with the AAUP and with the CTA and NEA. And that was their coalition. And the California State Employees Association affiliated with the service employees of the AFL/CIO and that unbeknownst, really, to the average UPC member, in the way that the AFL of CIO works meant that the UPC could no longer contest the bargaining rights because the way that - that Article 20 of the AFL/CIO constitution works is if there is a recognized bargaining agent that is represented by a union, an AFL/CIO union, no other AFL/CIO union can seek to decertify that union. It's a common sense provision to stop the unions from fighting with each other.

And interestingly enough, when we began to discuss this, the weaker the affiliation, the stronger the Article 20 protections. In some measure it's kind of like - it would crystal clear if it was a really strong history whatever, but the point of Article 20 was to permit

and actually support kind of paper mergers and things of that nature for that purpose. So that perversely, even though the UPC had this twenty-year history of having started the unions on all the campuses and had this probably a larger membership than the CFA had, now that the CFA was indirectly affiliated through an affiliate with the AFL/CIO, they still - that meant that the AFT could not continue to contest the bargaining rights. So if you understood that, and after it was explained, I understood it, you began to see that UPC was now dead. You know. And we either had to join the union that represented us or we had to be, you know, dogs in the manger or something, you know. And I prefer to, you know, go in. So most of the kind of - I would say sensible people in UPC saw that. Some saw it as well, we'll take it over. We'll go in and take it over. We're better leaders. We're better organizers. These wimpy people, we'll take it over.

And in part we did. I mean if you look at the history of who the leadership became, there are more people from UPC who became leaders of chapters and leaders of this - state officers and so forth, and people who were formally involved in the CFA, in part there was some generational stuff and then part we were activists, organizers, and you know so forth.

But to Crist and Ann Shadwick who had gone over earlier to be a CFA person, and many others - there were many good people in the CFA - and Crist and Ann and others were very smart. And then when this affiliation came about, they went to Washington and met with John Sweeney, the head of the SEIU and embraced the affiliation because they recognized that it would help them get the people who wanted to be in labor, affiliated labor, into the CFA. So they made a deal with John Sweeney that they would be actively recognized. And I built on that as I went in and got with other people - with the support of other people, got the affiliation not only to be through CSEA, but got a direct charter through SEIU as Local 1983, the year of our birth.

So my SEIU roots were very helpful in that process, and to me it was again one of life's great joys and blessings that the union that I was affiliated with already and part of tribally and so forth, suddenly becomes the union that my professor's union is going to be involved in. And since I had a lot of questions about the politics of the AFT nationally - Ms. Shanker is a right-wing Democrat at best, and Wurst at worst was, may he rest in peace, and the CFT politics were much better. I liked the CFT in California, the California branch, they were better. But a lot of this stuff on the national scene of AFT I didn't like a lot, and liked SEIU and I'm downwardly mobile so I liked the fact that the SEIU had real working people, in quotes, you know, whatever.

And so I went about with my janitor's union people and I would speak and I would say, "There's hope for the world that the janitor and the professors are in the same union." And then the janitors thought this was intolerable for me to say, so they developed their own counterattack and they would say, they didn't know about this hope for the world

stuff that Sampson says, but what it shows is that there possibly there could be hope for the professor. [Laughing]

HS: [Laughing] That's great.

TS: So this connection at SEIU, which played an important role in bringing the former AFT/UPC people together who were activists in unionism on all of our campuses, together with the - the people who had worked just as hard for faculty unionism, and Crisp's group, together to create a decent union, that worked. And both because I had the good sense to be willing to accept that, and the relationship within Ann and Gordon because I appreciated - I was less judgmental because I'm less judgmental. I don't say that as a - as a thing that is like, oh, isn't it good that I'm less -

[End of Tape 7 - Side 13 (A)]
[Begin Tape 7 - Side 14 (B)]

TS: - all UPCers that had all these real and imagined grievances against their counterparts in the CFA on their campus or whatever, I didn't have that and I basically let whatever that was go and started looking forward to try to build a union. I then became - to relate to my earlier comment, it probably was good that the UPC lost.

I then, as an organizer believed and still believe, that if you're trying to make a union that's inclusive of all of the faculty, you're better off coming at the organizing work from the center than you are from the activist left. UPC was the activist left of the faculty, and we had our difficulty reaching the rank-and-file centrist faculty members, to say nothing of those further right. And the organizing strength of the CFA was that it was more inclusive and more mainline in the academic persuasion. It was, indeed, an association and not a union.

And that was another beef that I had about kind of de-emphasizing the - in the election to narrow the difference, the AFT kind of pandered to de-emphasizing the unionism part of that, which at that time I, you know, strongly believed in and I didn't like how they did that. But it was - that was a smart move, I came to believe, not - I don't like how they did it and what they did about it because to this day there are people who don't want to write the word union, they don't want to speak the word union, they'll use the CFA as a euphemism for the union. And so those of us who think of it as a union, I won't say we're outnumbered by those who think of it as an association or as the faculty or whatever, but there are those differences in consciousness. And if you're trying to include everybody, you've got to - as an organizer you have to value and pay - so I developed language around, you know, when is a union more than a union? When it's

also an association. A professional association. When is a professional association more than an association? When it's also a union. And that was an effort to try to communicate that way instead of beating people over the head with this is the union, we're in a union, you have to be in the union, all that stuff. If a union is outside of your experience, I want you to be in the association. Gain your union consciousness through the doing, you know.

And so from my point of view, the organizing space that it gave us - are we on?

HS: Yeah, let me check - I want to check one thing. Yeah, we're good.

TS: The organizing space that it - and position that it gave us, I came to appreciate. And I also came to appreciate the hard work and good leadership of that whole generation of CFA leaders which created the CFA, you know. And which had enough vision to also be willing to be open to the diversity of including these UPC folks in. So that, to me, you know, was a good outcome. That we could come together, but we could come together in that sense by the left joining the center. The activist joining the other group. And so that was very helpful.

HS: Tim, can I ask you - just a technical thing. How did the coming together occur? I mean, did - I can't quite recall.

TS: Well, how it occurred was we first kind of formed a caucus and we gained recognition as a UBC caucus - I can't remember what we called it. And we were given direct representation on the board of the CFA. I was one of the board members. And that was in the period immediately when we started doing this in 1983. Then - so it must have probably been in '84 when we came in and we got representation on the board and recognition and how we would operate and whatever. And I remember as the process went on, I became convinced that we weren't going to get where we needed to go until we gave up being a separate group. That was different than many of my colleagues.

HS: Partly what I'm asking is how did you give up the AFT -

TS: Well, how we - I played a role in -

HS: - or whatever -

TS: - well, we were aided in giving up the AFT because of the AFT's right-wing politics nationally. Many people in the AFT shared my concern. It wasn't my only - my concern. So this dynamic of difference between California and Shanker was a good dynamic in that regard. And the dynamic of getting into the SEIU was a very positive thing, that we were - we were not just affiliated with these other none-AFL/CIO outfits,

but we were affiliated through the service employees with the AFL/CIO so we could continue the relation with the state fed and we see ourselves as a part of labor and so forth.

HS: But what I'm asking is how did it - I mean, technically was there a - like an election held or -

TS: Well, there was the caucus - as I recall it, the caucus had a meeting and selected several of us to be the representatives on the CFA board. And then the beginning of the fuller switchover in the election of 1985, the CFA, I had begun to think that if we had to become more part of the CFA and less sharply identified as the AFT people, and I also saw it in terms of politics. If you want to get anywhere in the CFA, you had to move in its political formation. So I, with the support of the caucus, ran for a seat on the board as a regular board member at large in the assembly. And I was elected clearly because of the support of the delegates who were members of the caucus and how we had worked that out.

But I also was aided and abetted in my efforts there because I had been asked because of my experience as an organizer and leader of demonstrations to help lead a - deal with a bargaining crisis after the first contract, the re-openers or whatever it was of 1985 where we had a big demonstration at the Chancellor's Office, and I put that together working with the staff and the - so I gained some - people saw that I knew how to do this stuff, you know, and that other UPC people had something to offer in this effort. And so that really started to rapidly make a process that then continued because then what happened is that UPC leaders became - like Pat Nicholson, became elected first as chapter presidents on their own campuses and then to statewide office in - you know, in CFA. So - and Shadwick was elected president. She had a UPC background, but had gone over and was regarded as a traitor by the UPC.

And then after her two terms as president, Pat Nicholson, who was a like a chapter president at Northridge and was clearly identified and UPC person, was elected as the president. And given the fact of that process, it began to be clear to anybody that could see that all of the UPC people who were sensible had all - had begun to come in and those went beyond simply paying dues and were going to be active, would rise to leadership because there was a - you know, there's not enough people to do the work of the union/association.

HS: What happened to the CFA charter? I mean is it just going to become dormant over time?

TS: To the what? No -

HS: I'm sorry, to the UPC. I made a mistake. To the UPC charter or whatever. I mean to its entity as an entity.

TS: It just died.

HS: It just dies is what I'm saying -

TS: It just died. It just ceased to exist.

HS: Just ceased.

TS: Some of it - the most doctrinaire people at Hayward and at Sacramento screwed around with it for a little while and then it just - it just died. The AFT never knew it. They couldn't contest, they weren't in a -

HS: Right. They didn't send a goon squad out or anything.

TS: - there were no monkey shines and fooling around or anything.

HS: Okay.

TS: They just wrote it off and they understood they lost this one, you know.

HS: Sure, sure.

TS: So I was on the board in 1985 to 1987 as an at-large delegate elected by the assembly to the CFA board. And in 1986 - in order to be a - in order to be an at-large member of the board, I had to be a member of the delegate assembly. In order to be a member of the delegate assembly, you had to be elected from San Francisco State. I actually - there was a big problem that occurred in that there was an election and I was supposed to be elected as vice-president. And instead, by a very narrow margin - what - a guy in Humanities, Stan Anderson, was elected. And it threw me and everybody that had been making this unity effort into a tailspin because it would have affected my statewide relationships as well.

So they got Stan Anderson to split the position with me, and that he would be the on-campus vice-president and I would be the delegate and so that the powers that be in the chapter worked that out. And subsequently, Stan Anderson, who really wasn't interested in - much in the union anyway, resigned and I became the Vice-President. And then, as I recall, the - I can't remember the - this in its totality, but I think the president at the time resigned or went on leave and I was elevated to be the president of the chapter in 1986.

And at the same time, things were happening in CFA statewide and I felt that as much as - as close as I had gotten to the CFA leadership, that the union was still run very centrally and that I was not really a part of the central leadership of the union. And, you know, the General Manager and the President, Bill Crist, and a few other people ran the union. And it didn't matter if you were on the board or whatever, you know. And I was a chapter president, but I really wasn't elected in my own right as a chapter president. So I was on the verge of thinking, well, maybe I've had my run. I helped this happen and I got other things to do.

And then we went through a process and created a new structure. And the new structure that was created was there was an office created of northern and southern vice-presidents. And to be a northern or southern vice-president you had to be a sitting chapter president. I guess I was not ready to quit so I decided I'll run for a term myself as chapter president, and I'll put my effort locally into the chapter. Well, I ran for chapter president, I was elected, and then I began to feel, well I have - you know, I'm back and I got - I now have some legitimate - you know, this little wobble that I got in on and, you know, the UPC piece is over, but now I'm the - you know, I am the San Francisco State Chapter President so I'll work at that.

And low and behold, at the election, I was elected Northern Vice-President, you know, because again of the combination of my liveliness, my work on the contract fight and my UPC roots, and my - I had a strong base of support in the delegates. So I was - low and behold I get - I didn't think I was going to be and it was just one of these - they don't have very planned elections in - in CFA and it's kind of spur of the moment thing. You're nominated and - you know, I was nominated, somebody else was nominated and I rolled.

And so for the next six years, three terms, I was the Northern Vice-President and the Chapter President of San Francisco State. So I actually served seven years as Chapter President of San Francisco State. The one year before I was elected, kind of acting, and then the three terms. And those terms were 1987 to '89, '89 to '91, and '91 to '93. And for those seven years, '86 to '93, I was the Chapter President of San Francisco State. And in terms of people's feelings about it, I was a popular president, I was - I represented the CFA. I was the union. And people - I did grievance work, I did - you know, I represented the union publicly. I was, you know, all these things. And so people were confused and they thought that Tim Sampson is the union, you know. I didn't do as good as I could have to get more people involved. I did pretty good, you know. I tried to build a union. And we did build a union in terms of numbers. I won't go through all of that, but -

And then it became apparent to me in '93 - I'm just going to give a brief history and then you can ask for some other stuff if you want. But it became apparent to me that I - I

wanted to continue as a state leader, but I didn't - I could not continue as the Northern Vice-President because you had to be a chapter president for that. And it was not proper for the chapter to have it - Bob Cherny's turn - Cherny was happy with it. I could be president for life. Well, that's not -

HS: [Laughing] Is that what Bob said?

TS: Yeah. That's not healthy for an organization. You have to have another president, you know. So I needed to get another office that didn't require me to be a sitting chapter president.

So very fortunately another office opened up, secretary. So I was able to step down as chapter president and step laterally to another elected office in CFA, that of secretary. I was elected secretary in '93 to '95, and I was re-elected in '95 to '97. Meanwhile, on the campus, I was delighted to be succeeded by Rick Gutierrez in 1993, and Rick was willing to follow me, which was damn hard. And he was a counselor, which was good because it was diversity and he was a Chicano, which was good because it was diversity and people rallied around and the chapter did well. And Rick chose to serve only one term and then Margo ran and Margo was elected in '95 and served those two years and was re-elected in '97 and is on - the election occurs in the fall of odd numbered years, so in the fall of '99 there will be an election again.

So that's kind of like the - and I continued during Rick's time and Margo's time to come to the chapter meetings and to try to work on membership in particular in the chapter.

Just a word on membership. When we - I don't know all of the numbers, but I think that the numbers were - in the UPC days, we might have had about three hundred members. And we now have, and have had for several years now, about seven hundred members. So during my term of office, we went probably from about three or four hundred members up to almost above six hundred, and then we continued to grow a little bit. And we've - among - in a difficult time, we've been almost the only chapter that has not lost substantial amount of membership in the crunch and turnover and so forth. And so now, unfortunately, statewide - look at all the chapters, all the other big campuses, San Jose, Long Beach, Northridge, San Diego, none of them have more than five hundred and fifty members and we still have seven hundred members. So we've done something right in that regard to keep our membership up, and partly it's the culture of our campus and partly it's the work that, you know, a number of - many people have done and we've developed a good process and we've had an excellent staff representative. Nina Fendel has just really done marvelous work on our campus for ten years now. And so many good things, you know, have happened.

And still and yet, to be honest, the chapter's not strong and deep and developing enough

newer leadership and, you know, all those kind of things. So if - I know it's feet of clay too well, but - and that's replicated in the rest of CFA. So - and my last hurrah with CFA - let me go back a minute. When I ran for - in 1995 - when I first was elected Northern Vice-President, I served with Ann Shadwick. I then served with Pat Nicholson in his terms of '89 to '91 and '91 to '93, and '93 to '95. And when Pat finished his third term and there was going to be an election for president, I was very interested in running. I was faced with the fact that Pat had provided for a succession by getting Terry Jones, who was African-American and was a leader of the Senate, not - and a member, but not active in the CFA, not a chapter president from Hayward. Pat had identified him and had, for affirmative action reasons, I had gotten him to run for vice-president.

So Terry was vice-president. And I went to Terry and I looked at myself and I said I would be a terrific president for this union. And I think I could win the presidency of this union even though because of my irreverence and my liveliness and my kind of non-academic nature, the powers that be in the union like [Christian] and Shadwick and, you know, some others, I think while liking me and being willing for me to have a leadership role, I think I didn't fit the mold of what they thought the next president should be like. So they weren't - no one was asking me to run so it would have been a struggle, you know. And I was willing to do it, to make the run. But I was not willing to make the run against Terry. It seemed to me if you believe in diversity, you either believe in it or you don't believe in it, you know.

So I said I'm going to develop a relationship with Terry and I'm going to tell Terry that if he's gonna run, I will support him. And if he's not going to run, I hope he'll support me. So I set about to develop a relationship with Terry. I got him to be involved with a project that I headed up for the union and invented, kind of ill-fated but interesting project, to have the union actively participate in a founding of the Monterey Bay campus made at Fort Ord. And Terry was on the team that I put together and led. And he and I did get to know each other and to trust each other, and when he told me that he wanted to be president and would run, I supported him in that effort and he was elected without opposition. And I worked with him in his first term, '95 to '97, and quite frankly, '97 meant I'd been a statewide officer ten years. Three terms as northern vice-president and three terms as secretary. I had been chapter president for seven years. It was really time for me to step aside further. You can't believe in renewal if you keep taking the space.

So I really would have preferred to end my time there. Terry prevailed upon me - he and I had become even closer when he was elected president, and I really became a very close confidante, advisor, friend, comrade, and fellow officer. And when he asked me to run for another term to help him in his second term, I somewhat reluctantly agreed, but I told everyone this is my last term. And I would have preferred to stay a secretary. I was comfortable doing that particular job and it was appropriate. I was one of the titled officers and so forth. But there was another person in the union that was facing the same

problem in transition that I had faced. Rollie Houser, the chapter president at Chico, a good leader, was faced with the problem of finding a non-chapter president office. He had been the Northern Vice-President and if he - if he stepped down as Chico president, which he needed to do for the same reason I did, then he wouldn't be able to be Northern Vice-President.

So I decided that if it would work, I would become - I would become Membership and Organizing Chair, which was a natural office for me, fit my talents. And that I would serve out my two years and try to replace myself in that office, try to help the union grow, and that's what I would do. And so that came - that came to pass and without going into details, it did create some problems for me because I no longer was privy to being a full officer of the union even though the committee chairs are elected office. And so that created certain problems. I continued to do a lot of work, which amounts in part to staff work for Terry. He's not well-organized. He needs a lot of help and I did that. Doesn't get a lot of help from the staff. And so I have this complex role in the union which I delight in calling "Utility Infielder," and it was just really - I help Terry, I do staff work, which is out of my staff background, my organizing background, as well as being a leader in my own right.

And so it's been - rather than having, you know, many big problems about that or any confusions, it's also been a good thing for -- you know, I crossed over when I became a leader of the Citizens Action League from being an organizer supporting other leaders to being a leader, working with staff as well as other leaders. There are connections between the roles. It's interesting to be able to go back and forth and, you know, to do those things.

And the union has been a home for my abundant energies and it has been a great privilege to be able to work on my own campus and statewide in the university which I - in which I work where I am a faculty member, and to continue to connect to community organizing in a variety of ways through the Center For Third World Organizing set of tribes and through representing the CFA and certain kinds of related causes and the like. And through the support of work that my students do and other friends in organizing, I've kept a full range of organizing practice and connection and consultation and training and all of that to go with my menu of doing the union work and to go with my teaching. And it's melded very well together. So that's really my story.

And when I came to evaluate my life, when I had stomach cancer operation a year ago and I looked at all of that, I said how really fortunate could it be that when I graduated in 1962 from social work school, I've had thirty-five years of being in all the movements and organizing efforts of our times, of learning the craft of organizing, of being a leader, of being able to be both in community organization and in the trade union movement, of being able to connect and - connected to my teaching, support, make a living through my

teaching and support the work that way, to do it with the joy and liveliness that I have as a human being, to touch so - with so many people, to have so many tribes and so many families, it's a blessing of a life.

HS: That's wonderful. Thank you very much. Boy, it's appreciated.

TS: So you and Lynn, when you review the stuff on the union, you may have some - you may want me to develop some of those things a little more. That would be a clean-up, so maybe you want to talk to Lynn and go over that part 'cause I think I've hit the - I've given the outlines of that, but I - if you want to have more stuff on the campus organizing of CFA or you want more stuff on some kinds of things that I've been involved in, the Monterey Bay project, the campaign fights, the campaign work that I do, if you want any - any of those kinds of things to - I'd be happy to - you know, to add those to this at you and Lynn's behest. But you now, at least, have beginnings of the tale.

HS: [Laughing] Okay. Thanks so much, Tim.

**[End of Tape 7 - Side 14 (B)]
[End of Interview]**